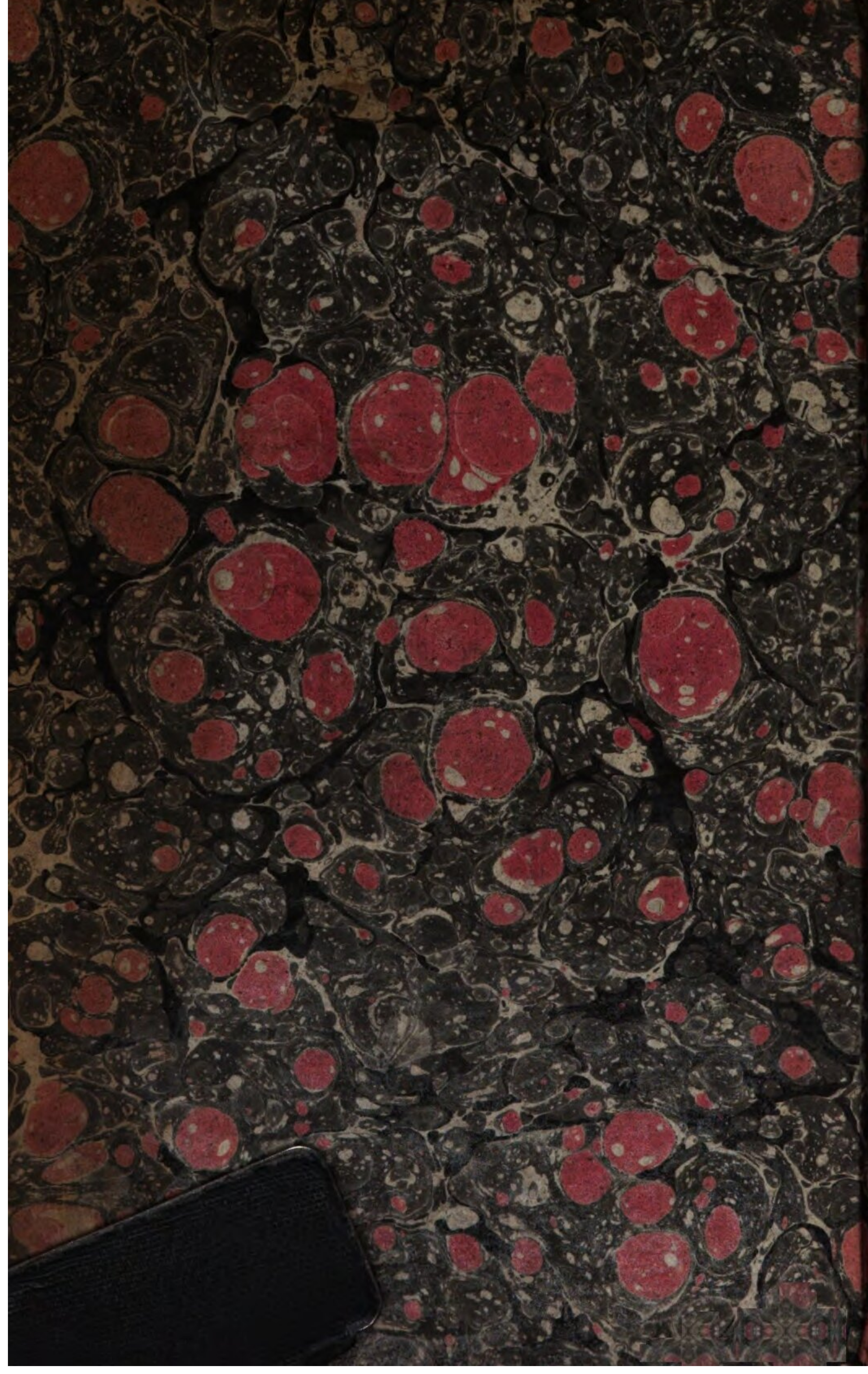
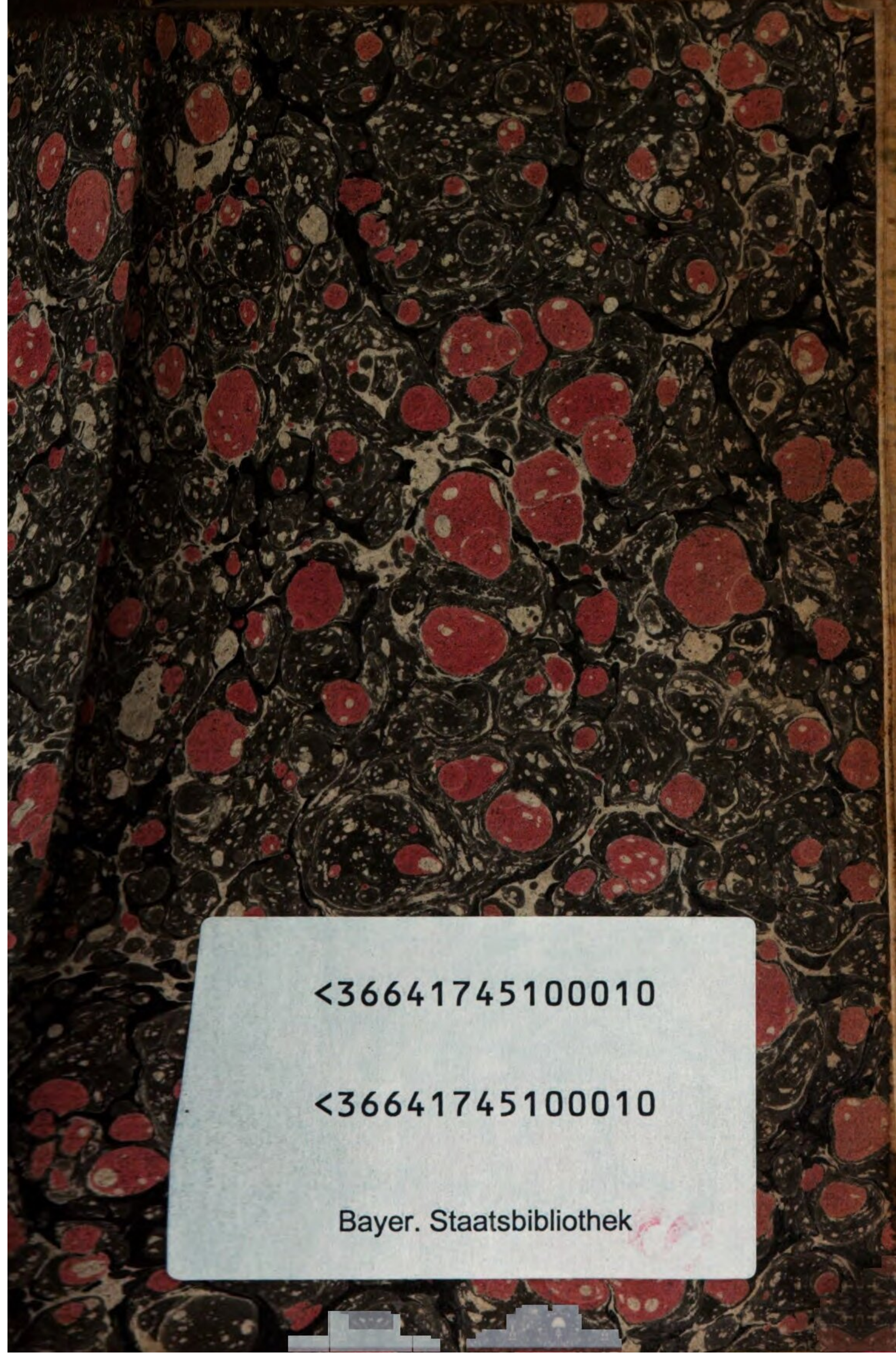








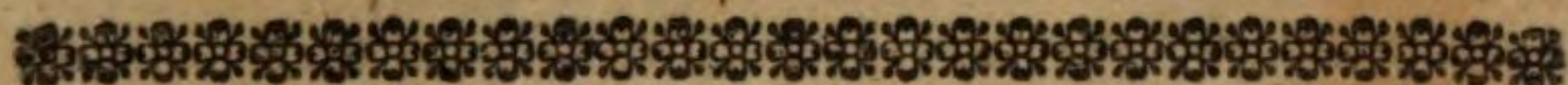
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St-Evremond



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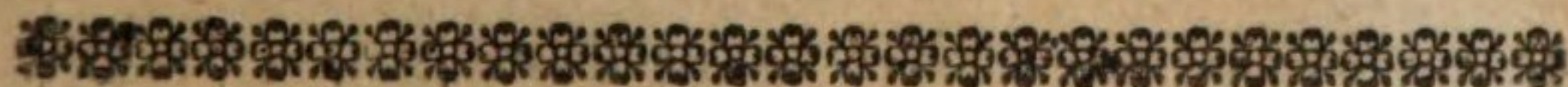
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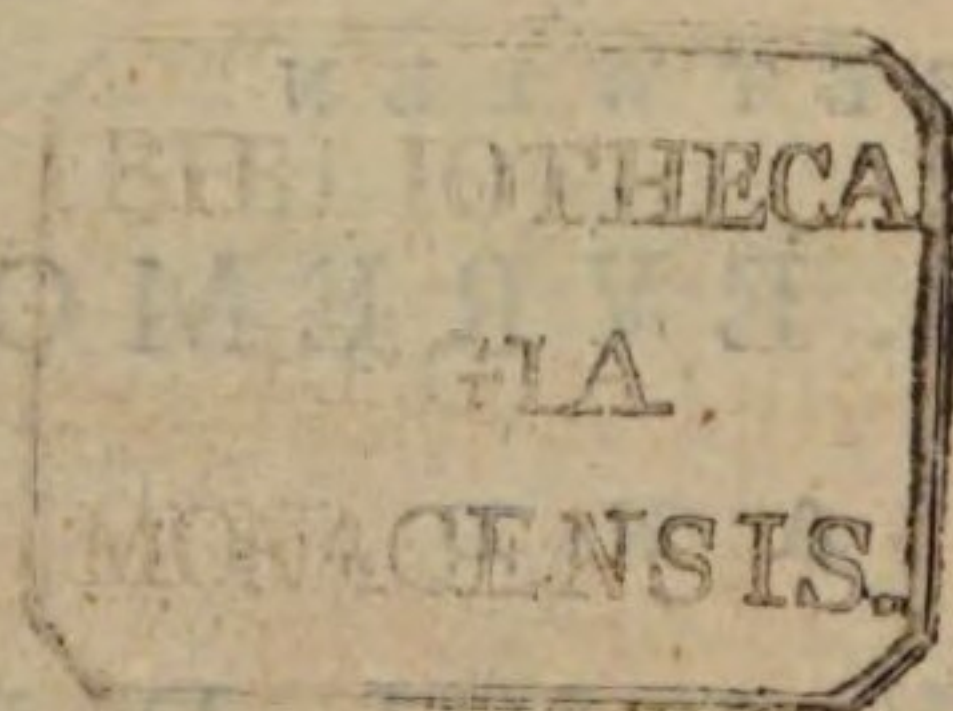
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A N D

Mr. W A L L E R.

V O L U M E II.





LETTERS

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BETWEEN

M. DE ST. EVREMOND

AND

Mr. WALLER.

Collected and published

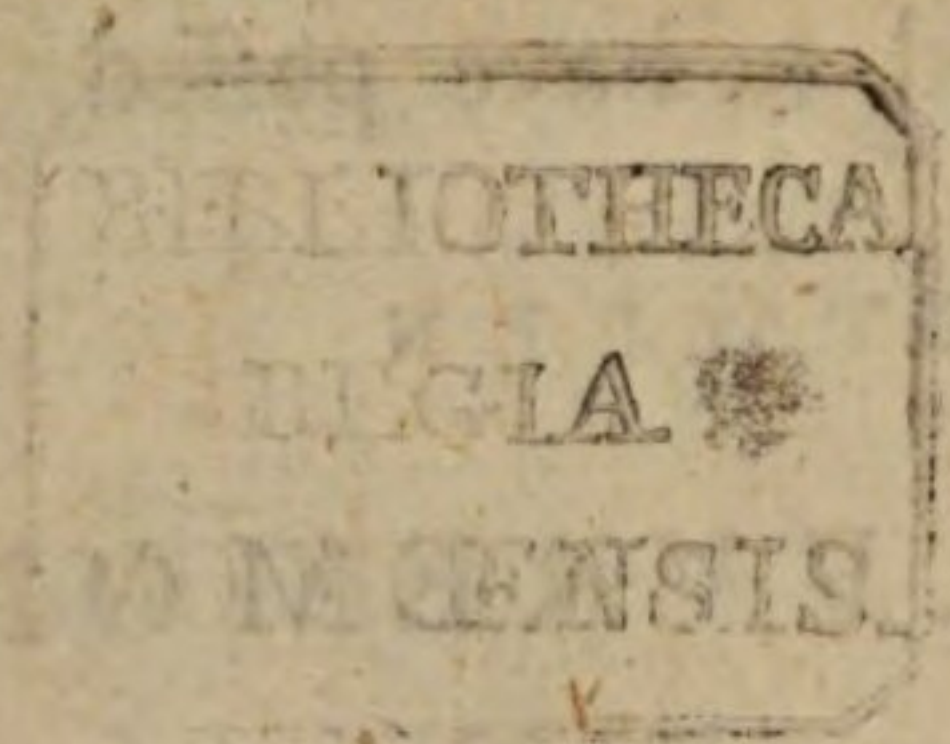
By the EDITOR of the LETTERS between
Theodosius and Constantia.

VOLUME II.

LONDON,

Printed for T. BECKET and P. A. DE HONDT,
in the Strand. MDCC LXIX.

LETTERS



ALIA MUSEI

AND
WALLER

Collected and printed

By the Editor of the Letters
London and America

VOLUME 3

LONDON

Printed by T. Baskett, at the
in the Strand



LETTERS

BETWEEN

M. DE ST. EVREMOND, &c.

VOL. II.

LETTER I.

WALLER *to* ST. EVREMOND.



O, my *St. Evremond*, it is
Time to close the idle
Pursuits of Poetry. I am
now descending from the
little Eminence of Life, and must
VOL. II. B soon

soon drop into those dark, unfathom-
ed Waters that lie at the Bottom. —
The Impressions of Fancy are never
indulged without Danger. They leave
the Mind in a fluctuating and unset-
tled State. They withdraw its At-
tention from fixed Principles and
Points of View. They confuse its
clear and simple Lights, by mingling
them with Shadows and fantastic Ap-
pearances. Are such Circumstances
proper for declining Years? — where
all should be steady, consistent, and u-
niform — where we should tread only
on the firm Ground of Philosophy —
shall we step aside like Children to ga-
ther Flowers? Believe me, *St. Evre-*
mond, to pay a serious Court to the
Muses

Muses would now be as absurd, as it would be to address any other Mistress on the same Terms. The Attempt would be equally fruitless and ridiculous :

The Muse that caught from *Sidney's* Eyes
her Fire,

In *Sidney's* Ashes felt the Flame expire.

Poetical Ground, like every other Soil, becomes barren and unfruitful by too long Exercise. There is a Period in Life beyond which Poets, in particular, ought not to think of writing. Fancy is not the Guest of Age ; and, therefore, old Men rarely succeed in Works of that Nature. Those depend principally on Enthusiasm ; and that

is, almost peculiarly, the Growth of young and vigorous Minds. We grow cold to the Love of Nature, after a long Acquaintance with her, and it is that Love to which poetical Enthusiasm owes its very Existence. Nor is it easy to substitute any thing of equal Energy in its Place. It is not many Years since I attempted some Poems on divine Subjects, thinking those most suited to my Age and Condition. But I cannot boast of Success, not even of Satisfaction in those Performances. They may be pleasing to devout Minds; but there is something wanting. It is the *Vis Ingenii*, the Vigour of Imagination and Expression that has failed. You will consider

sider these frank Acknowledgments
as an unanswerable Apology for the
Silence of what you call *my Muses*.
Yours are of a more elastic Kind;
and, like the Nymphs of your Coun-
try, they will dance till they die.

L E T T E R II.

ST. EVREMOND *to* WALLER.

IT was usual, I think, amongst the ancient *Hebrews*, when they had passed the Period of Sixty, to make a Feast for their Friends, and sing the Songs of *Sion*. There was something truly rational and philosophical in this chearful Custom. It was the natural Tribute of good Sense and Gratitude. A People who believed the Mortality of their Existence, could not but look upon the Prolongation of it as an Effect of the divine Benevolence, and every Testimony of their

Joy

Joy was, on that Principle, an Act of Religion. — What is the Reason that we have conceived such very different Ideas of the proper Deportment of Age? We have imposed upon it a Gravity of Manners, and a Severity of Studies. We add to the Weights that Time hangs upon that Period. The lighter Amusements are deemed improper, and the Indulgence of Fancy must be utterly excluded. — I own I am unable to discover the Wisdom, or even the Propriety of this. — What! because I have the Promise but of a few Years before I must be locked up in the Grave, is the Work of Death to begin already? Shall it not be left to Nature? Am I to die

B 4 through

through my best Parts and Faculties before she gives the Summons? Must I now part with my Vivacity, my Fancy? — shut up every Source of Amusement, because they must infallibly be taken from me at last? Is it the Art of Accommodation I am to learn? Is any Art necessary for sleeping in the Grave? Were it so, the Cave of *Trophonius* would, indeed, be a proper School. But if my Sleep will be the same, whether I am called from thence, or beckoned from the Circle of the Muses and the Graces, I cannot entertain a Doubt to which of those Scenes my proper Happiness should lead me. I have always admired the Death of *Buchanan*. He
was

was willing to go to Rest with agreeable Ideas, and therefore retained to the last the Image of that Object, which, in Life, had given him the greatest Pleasure.

Cynthia prima suis miserum me cepit
ocellis

Contactum nullis ante cupidinibus.

With that Couplet of *Propertius* he closed the Scene; and, though his Death was more poetical than pious, he certainly was right in his first Principle. To what Purpose, *Waller*, should we affect a cold and sombrous Gravity of Temper? Our little Fires will too soon be extinguished. Let us stir up and brighten
the

10 LETTER II.

the dying Embers. We may not strike the Lyre with the Vivacity of Youth, but we may yet call from it some soothing Notes to divert the Idea of eternal Silence.

L E T.

LETTER III.

WALLER *to* ST. EVREMOND.

IF there should be no greater Impropriety in giving the Faculty of Speech to the Vegetable than to the Animal Creation, many fine Morals, I think, might be drawn from Fables designed in that Part of Nature. For my own Part, I am fond of animating every thing around me ; and there is hardly a Tree or Flower of any Note in my Garden, which is not, in my Idea, invested with some peculiar Design or Quality ; which has not some relative Interest, Consequence, or Pursuit. It was under
the

the Influence of this Kind of Fancy,
that the following little Piece was
written ; which may not improperly
be called *the Lady's Moral*.

The T U L I P *and the*
M Y R T L E.

I.

'T WAS on the Border of a Stream
A gayly-painted Tulip stood,
And, gilded by the Morning Beam,
Surveyed her Beauties in the Flood.

II.

And sure, more lovely to behold,
Might nothing meet the wistful Eye,
Than Crimson fading into Gold,
In Streaks of fairest Symmetry.

III.

III.

The beauteous Flower, with Pride elate,
 Ah me! that Pride with Beauty dwells!
 Vainly affects superior State,
 And thus in empty Fancy swells.

IV.

“ O Lustre of unrivalled Bloom!
 “ Fair Painting of a Hand divine!
 “ Superior far to mortal Doom,
 “ The Hues of Heaven alone are mine!

V.

“ Away, ye worthless, formless Race!
 “ Ye Weeds, that boast the Name of
 Flowers!
 “ No more my native Bed disgrace,
 “ Unmeet for Tribes so mean as yours!

VI.

VI.

“ Shall the bright Daughter of the Sun,
 “ Associate with the Shrubs of Earth?
 “ Ye Slaves, your Sovereign’s Presence
 shun!
 “ Respect her Beauties and her Birth.

VII.

“ And Thou, dull, fullen Ever-green!
 “ Shalt Thou my shining Sphere in-
 vade?
 “ My Noon-day Beauties beam unseen,
 “ Obscured beneath thy dusky Shade!

VIII.

“ Deluded Flower!” the Myrtle cries,
 “ Shall we thy Moment’s Bloom adore?
 “ The meanest Shrub that you despise,
 “ The meanest Flower has Merit more.

IX.

IX.

“ That Daisy, in its simple Bloom,
“ Shall last along the changing Year;
“ Blush on the Snow of Winter’s Gloom,
“ And bid the smiling Spring appear.

X.

“ The Violet, that, those Banks beneath,
Hides from thy Scorn its modest Head,
“ Shall fill the Air with fragrant Breath,
“ When thou art in thy dusty Bed.

XI.

“ Ev’n I who boast no golden Shade,
“ Am of no shining Tints possest,
“ When low thy lucid Form is laid,
“ Shall bloom on many a lovely Breast.

XII.

XII.

“ And he, whose kind and fostering Care
 “ To thee, to me, our Beings gave,
 “ Shall near his Breast my Flowrets wear,
 “ And walk regardless o’er thy Grave.

XIII.

“ Deluded Flower! the friendly Screen,
 “ That hides thee from the Noon-tide
 Ray,
 “ And mocks thy Passion to be seen,
 Prolongs thy transitory Day.

XIV.

“ But kindly Deeds with Scorn repaid,
 “ No more by Virtue need be done:
 “ I now withdraw my dusky Shade,
 “ And yield thee to thy darling Sun.

XV.

XV.

Fierce on the Flower the scorching Beam
 With all its Weight of Glory fell;
 The Flower exulting caught the Gleam,
 And lent its Leaves a bolder Swell.

XVI.

Expanded by the searching Fire,
 The curling Leaves the Breast disclos'd;
 The mantling Bloom was painted higher,
 And ev'ry latent Charm expos'd.

XVII.

But when the Sun was sliding low,
 And Ev'ning came, with Dews so cold;
 The wanton Beauty ceas'd to blow,
 And fought her bending Leaves to fold.

XVIII.

Those Leaves, alas, no more would close ;
Relaxed, exhausted, sickening, pale ;
They left her to a Parent's Woes,
And fled before the rising Gale.

I think there cannot be any great Impropriety in the Indulgence of Poetical Amusements of this *moral* Nature, even at my far advanced Time of Life. You found some Difficulty, notwithstanding, to bring me over to this Opinion ; and I cannot yet think that an old Man can spend his Time very properly in what you call the Circle of the Muses and the Graces. There is one *John Milton*, an old Commonwealth's Man, who hath, in
the

the latter Part of his Life, written a Poem intituled *Paradise Lost* ; and to say the Truth, it is not without some Fancy and bold Invention. But I am much better pleased with some smaller Productions of his in the Scenical and Pastoral Way ; one of which, called *Lycidas*, I shall herewith send you, that you may have some Amends for the Trouble of reading this bad Poetry.

L E T T E R IV.

ST. EVREMOND *to* WALLER.

I THANK you for your Vegetable Fable, and have long thought as you do, that a very beautiful Collection of moral Poems of the same Kind might be drawn from that Part of Nature. The Enthusiasm that would be excited by the Scenery in general, and the Pleasure which might arise from the minuter Beauties of Description, would give to Compositions of this sort many evident Advantages. Nature is a much better Moralist than *Seneca* or *Epicte-*
tus,

tus, and gives her Lessons both more agreeably and more effectually.

The Poem called *Lycidas*, which you say is written by Mr. *Milton*, has given me much Pleasure. It has in it what I conceive to be the true Spirit of Pastoral Poetry, the old *Arcadian* Enthusiasm. Your *English* Poets have been strangely mistaken, when they have thought it possible to accommodate the Genius of this Poetry to the inelegant Simplicity of your Clowns. Your *Spenser*, in other Respects an agreeable Painter of Nature, is, in his Rustic Pastorals, insupportable. It is not to be denied, however, that *Theocritus* is, in some Places,

quite as vile as *Spenser*, and *Virgil* almost as vile as *Theocritus*. But the latter, I think, seems to have written beneath the Dignity of Poetry with Reluctance. The Language of his Taste was always,

—— *Sylvæ sint Consule dignæ !*

But his Reverence for his Model led him into an Imitation of his Defects.

The great Error seems to have arisen from an Inattention to this Doctrine, that every Species of Poetry is under the Patronage of the Graces. How the *Greeks* should, at any time, forget this, is somewhat difficult to account for ; as the *Muses* and the *Graces* are with them, very often,
syno-

synonymous Terms, and their Word *Charites* is used indifferently for either. Yet it is certain that some of their best Poets have frequently forgotten in whose Temple they were worshiping.

It is not the most unadorned Simplicity that is improper in any Species of Pastoral Composition; for Simplicity is the Ground of every thing that is graceful. It is the Introduction of Objects or Ideas that are in themselves low and inelegant, which spoils the Beauty of Pastoral Imagery. Taste is always attended with a peculiar Delicacy, and will be

disgusted with every Work of Art,
where that is wanting.

But if your *Spenser* is too gross,
your *Dryden* is too trim, and too full
of low Conceits in his Pastoral Sce-
nery. Nothing can be a stronger
Proof of this than the following Cou-
plet,

For thee, gay Month, the Groves Green
Liveries wear,

If not the first, the fairest of the Year.

It is hardly possible to conceive any
thing more contemptible than the
Idea of dressing the Woods in Li-
very ; yet I doubt not that this Cou-
plet has had its Admirers. Sure I
am,

am, that *Malherbe* has been praised for a thousand Verses as vile.

Shall we praise the *Italian* Pastoral? How is it possible? Even the celebrated Pastoral Comedy of *Guarini* is, with all the Profusion of Genius, a most absurd Performance. He is right in the Locality of his Piece; but his great Misfortune is, that Love is not a local thing. Neither is it romantic; though, by setting the Ideas afloat, it sometimes gives People a Turn to what we call the Romantic. Neither will it bear to be bound up in Allegory. We hate the very Idea of Demi-Gods and Satyrs. Unless we held the Religion
that

that bred them, it would be impossible to consider them otherwise than in a farcical Light. In the Business of Love, therefore, they will not go down, because Love is a serious thing.

What pleases me in *John Milton's* Poem, beside the true Pastoral Enthusiasm and the Scenical Merit, is the various and easy Flow of its Numbers. Those Measures are well adapted to the tender kind of Imagery, though they are not expressive of the first strong Impressions of Grief.

A little Poem of this Kind was lately put into my Hands, which, as it has not been printed, I will transcribe for you.

A M O-

A M O N O D Y

*Inscribed to my worthy Friend J. S.
being written in his Garden at Amwell,
in Hertfordshire, the Beginning of the
Year 1669.*

I.

FRIEND of my Genius! on whose
natal Hour,
Shone the same Star, but shone with
brighter Ray;
Oft as amidst thy *Amwell's* Shades I stray,
And mark thy true Taste in each winding
Bower,
From my full Eye why falls the tender
Shower?
While other Thoughts than these fair
Scenes convey,
Bear on my trembling Mind, and melt its
Powers away.

II.

II.

Ah me ! my Friend ! in happier Hours I
spread

Like thee, the wild Walk o'er the varied
Plain ;

The fairest Tribes of *Flora's* painted
Train,

Each bolder Shrub that grac'd her genial
Bed,

When old *Sylvanus*, by young Wishes led,
Stole to her Arms, of such fair Offspring
vain,

That bore their Mother's Beauties on
their Head.

III.

Like thee, inspired by Love—'twas *Delia's*
Charms,

'Twas *Delia's* Taste the new Creation
gave :

For her my Groves in plaintive Sighs
would wave,

And call her absent to their Master's Arms.

IV.

IV.

She comes—Ye Flowers your fairest
Blooms unfold!

Ye waving Groves, your plaintive Sighs
forbear!

Breathe all your Fragrance to the amo-
rous Air,

Ye smiling Shrubs whose Heads are
cloath'd with Gold!

V.

She comes, by Truth, by fair Affection
led,

The long-lov'd Mistress of my faithful
Heart!

The Mistress of my Soul, no more to
part,

And all my Hopes, and all my Vows are
sped.

Vain, vain Delusions! Dreams for ever
fled!

Ere

Ere twice the Spring had waked the
genial Hour,
The lovely Parent bore one beauteous
Flower,
And drooped her gentle Head,
And sunk, for ever sunk, into her silent
Bed.

VI.

Friend of my Genius ! Partner of my Fate !
To equal Sense of painful Suffering born !
From whose fond Breast a lovely Parent
torn,
Bedewed thy pale Cheek with a Tear so
late ;—
Oh ! let us mindful of the short, short Date,
That bears the Spoil of human Hopes
away,
Indulge sweet Memory of each happier
Day !

No !

No! close, for ever close the Iron-Gate
 Of cold Oblivion on that dreary Cell,
 Where the pale Shades of past Enjoy-
 ments dwell,
 And, pointing to their bleeding Bosoms
 say,
 On Life's disastrous Hour what varied
 Woes await!

VII.

Let Scenes of softer, gentler Kind
 Awake to Fancy's soothing Call,
 And milder on the pensive Mind,
 The shadowed Thought of Grief shall
 fall.
 Oft as the slowly-closing Day
 Draws her pale Mantle from the Dew-
 star's Eye,
 What Time, the Shepherd's Cry
 Leads from the pastured Hills his Flocks
 away,
 Attentive to the tender Lay
 That

That steals from *Philomela's* Breast,
Let us in musing Silence stray,
Where LEE beholds in Mazes flow
His uncomplaining Waters flow,
And all his whispering Shores invite the
Charm of Rest.

L E T-

L E T T E R V.

W A L L E R *to* S T. E V R E M O N D.

I WAS much pleased with a Conversation, which I overheard a few Days ago, between the King and an honest *Worcestershire* Baronet, who was lately elected for a Borough in that County. The good-natured Man came up to take his Seat among us, and, as he lived in the Neighbourhood of the Royal Oak, he supposed that he could not pay a better Compliment to his Majesty than by bringing him a Branch of his old Asylum. Who is that Antique (said the King,) with a withered Branch in his Hand?

— It is Sir *Thomas* ****, Member
for ****.

The K I N G.

Sir *Thomas*, I am glad to see you :
I hope you can give a good Account
of our Friends in *Worcestershire*.

Sir T H O M A S ****.

I wish I could, please your Ma-
jesty; but there is a Blacksmith's
Wife —

The K I N G.

No matter for her — I enquired
only after the Health of your Fa-
mily.

Sir

Sir THOMAS.

Thank God! in good Health —
But this Woman, please your Ma-
jesty —

The KING.

What of her?

Sir THOMAS.

— Has sworn a Child to your Ma-
jesty.

The KING.

I am glad of it — I do remember
that I met a Woman, when I went a
Wood-cutting with Farmer *Penderell*.

Sir THOMAS.

A rosy Complexion, please your
Majesty!

The K I N G.

No Matter! What is become of the Woman, and her Child? —

Sir T H O M A S.

She is very well taken Care of, please your Majesty! The Churchwardens are my Tenants, and I ordered them to allow her an upper Sheet.

The K I N G.

Fye! Fye!

Sir T H O M A S.

Please your Majesty, I was near losing my Election by it. Some of that Parish were Free Men, and they said that I, as a Magistrate, ought to
have

have sent a Warrant to your Majesty,
to give a Bond to the Parish, or to
pay Ten Pounds.

The K I N G.

Why did you not do your Duty ?

Sir T H O M A S.

Because, please your Majesty, I
thought it my Duty not to do it.
Your Majesty has been at a great Ex-
pence of late.

The K I N G.

True ; very true, Sir *Thomas* !
What is that Branch in your Hand ?
Some Token, I suppose, by which
you hold your Lands —

Sir T H O M A S.

No ; 'tis something by which your Majesty holds your Lands — 'Tis a Branch of that blessed Oak which preserved your Majesty's precious Life.

The K I N G.

This is a wooden Compliment ; but it is honest, and I thank you for it — You have Wit, Sir *Thomas* ; why do not we see you oftener at Court ?

Sir T H O M A S.

I can do your Majesty much more Service in the Country, by keeping up a Spirit of Loyalty and Good Will towards you amongst my Neighbours.

The

The K I N G.

And how do you manage that Point?

Sir T H O M A S.

I give them Beef, and bid 'em fall to without the long Grace of the Roundheads. Then I give 'em strong Beer, and they cry God blefs your Majesty.

The K I N G.

If that is the Toast, Sir *Thomas*, you are the King; and, in Truth, I think you govern with profound Policy. Could I adopt the same Measures, I should have much less Trouble; but there is no finding Beef e-
D 4 nough

nough for that hungry Circle which you see there.

Sir T H O M A S.

God bless your Majesty! I have Ten fat Oxen in *Worcestershire*; and Nine of them are heartily at your Majesty's Service.

* * * * *

This bountiful Offer of the honest Baronet's made the King laugh so violently, that it put an End to the Conversation. His Majesty told us, with great Good Humour, what we had to expect, and added, that he hoped every Member of the House would be as ready to give as Sir *Thomas* * * * *, that he might be able to find

find Wine for the Feast. — This is a Measure which I will promote with all my Power ; for the King's Necessities are truly deplorable. Considering his extreme Poverty, his Good Humour is astonishing. I believe there never was a Prince at the same Time so pleasant and so poor.

LET-

LETTER VI.

WALLER *to* ST. EVREMOND.

O VALES of *Penshurst*, now so long
unseen !

Forgot each secret Shade, each winding
Green ;

Those lonely Paths what Art have I to
tread,

Where once young Love, the blind En-
thusiast, led ?

Yet if the Genius of your conscious Groves
His *Sidney* in my *Sacharissa* loves ;
Let him with Pride her cruel Power unfold ;
By him my Pains let *Evremond* be told.

The

The LOVES of THYRSIS and
SACHARISSA.

Related by the GENIUS of Penshurst.

W HATE'ER hath met mine Ear of
Tale or Song,

Since he of *Arcady* first stole the Reed
Of *Hermes*, and made every Shepherd scorn
His Evening Slumbers, heedless have I
heard,

Yet Pity for the gentle *Thyrsis* drew
Me frequent from the mossy Breast of Sleep;
And when beneath the cold Moon's sha-
dowy Light,

Like that fond Bird which courteth Silence
best,

He thus complained harmonious, I have
fighed,

And felt his Sorrow through my Depth of
Shades.

THYR-

THYRSIS *at* Penshurst.

WHILE in the Park I sing, the listen-
ing Deer

Attend my Passion, and forget to fear.

When to the Beeches I report my Flame,
They bow their Heads as if they felt the
same:

To Gods appealing, when I reach their
Bowers

With loud Complaints, they answer me
in Showers.

To thee a wild, and cruel Soul is given,
More deaf than Trees, and prouder than
the Heaven.

Love's Foe protest, why dost thou falsely
feign

Thy self a *Sidney*? from which noble Strain
He sprung, that could so far exalt the
Name

Of Love, and warm our Nation with his
Flame,

That

That all we can of Love, or high Desire,
Seems but the Smoke of amorous *Sidney's*
Fire.

Nor call her Mother, who so well does
prove,
One Breast may hold both Chastity and
Love.

Never can she, that so exceeds the Spring
In Joy and Bounty, be supposed to bring
One so destructive; to no human Stock
We owe this fierce Unkindness, but the
Rock,

That cloven Rock produced thee, by
whose Side
Nature to recompence the fatal Pride
Of such stern Beauty, placed those healing
Springs,
Which not more Help than that Destructi-
on brings.

Thy

Thy Heart no ruder than the rugged Stone,
I might, like *Orpheus*, with my numerous
Moan

Melt to Compassion now my traiterous
Song

With thee conspires to do the Singer
wrong.

While thus I suffer not myself to lose

The Memory of what augments my
Woes:

But with my own Breath still foment the
Fire

Which flames as high as Fancy can
aspire.

This last Complaint th' indulgent Ears
did pierce

Of just *Apollo*, President of Verse:

Highly concerned, that the Muse should
bring

Damage to one whom he had taught to
sing;

Thus

Thus he advised me; On yon aged Tree
Hang up thy Lute, and hie thee to the Sea,
That there with Wonders thy diverted
Mind
Some Truce at least may with this Passion
find.

Ah, cruel Nymph! from whom her hum-
ble Swain,
Flies for Relief, unto the raging Main;
And from the Winds and Tempests does
expect
A milder Fate than from her cold Neglect:
Yet there he'll pray that the Unkind may
prove
Blest in her Choice, and vows this endless
Love
Springs from no Hope of what she can
confer,
But from those Gifts which Heaven has
heaped on her.

Thus

— — —
Thus fung he plaintive, and full fore I
grieved
That the fair Mistrefs of these flowery
Plains,
Where Love and Nature triumphed, Foe
to Love,
Tho' born of *Sidney's* Race, in such high
Scorn
Should hold his gentle Prayer; yet Shep-
herd cease
These vain Complaints of Cruelty, I cried,
And Threats of rash Despair: These only
feed
The Female Pride; they soften not their
Hearts.
Would you succeed, let soothing Blan-
dishments
Of careless Praise, as from a Mind at Ease,
That calls for no Reward, invade their Ear.
Eager they drink the golden Draught that
flows

From

From this unnoted Source, and yield that
 Love,
 That rich Reward, which, first solicited,
 Were harder to be won ; for Flattery fails
 not,
 Save when her thin Veil shews the hated
 Form
 Of selfish Hope behind. Obedient thus
 The Swain resumed his Song.

THYRSIS *at* Penshurst.

HAD *Sacharissa* lived when Mortals
 made
 Choice of their Deities, this sacred Shade
 Had held an Altar to her Power that gave
 The Peace and Glory which these Alleys
 have.
 Embroidered so with Flowers where she
 stood,
 That it became a Garden of a Wood :

Her Prefence has such more than human
Grace

That it can civilize the rudest Place ;
And Beauty too and Order can impart,
Where Nature ne'er intended it, nor Art.
The Plants acknowledge this, and her ad-
mire

No less than those of old did *Orpheus's*
Lyre.

If she sit down, with Tops all towards her
bowed,

They round about her into Arbours crowd ;
Or if she walk, in even Ranks they stand
Like some well marshalled, and obsequious
Band.

Amphion so made Stones and Timber leap
Into fair Figures from a confused Heap :
And in her Symmetry of Parts is found
A Power, like that of Harmony in Sound.

Ye

LETTER VI. 51

Ye lofty Beeches tell this matchless
 Dame

That if together ye fed all one Flame,
 It could not equalize the hundredth Part
 Of what her Eyes have kindled in my
 Heart.

Go, Boy, and carve this Passion on the Bark
 Of yonder Tree, which stands the sacred
 Mark

Of noble *Sidney's* Birth, when such benign,
 Such more than mortal-making Stars did
 shine;

That there they cannot but for ever prove
 The Monument and Pledge of humble
 Love:

His humble Love, whose Hope shall ne'er
 rise higher

Than for a Pardon that he dares admire.

— — —
And did no Smile, good *Thyrsis*, no kind
Look
On these soft Numbers fall?—O yes, more
precious
Than all the Treasures that the *Lydian*
Wave
Sweeps from his Sands of Gold; but, cold-
ly pleased,
These Strains of Art and Fancy, she
replied,
Fantastic Minds amuse: They love the
Errors
That live in Poets' Creeds, their vain Di-
vinities,
And idle Adorations; strange to me,
Who love no Language but of Truth and
Nature!
Yet, gentle *Thyrsis*, other Hopes are thine.
This haughty Fair the Love of Power may
charm,

And

And yield her to thy Wish ; some other
 Mistress,
 Some Object of a former Flame must bleed
 A Victim on her Altar — She must know
 Must see the Sacrifice, thyself unseen,
 Unconscious that she finds the flattering
 Bait.
 Haste then, and leave it in these lonely
 Walks,
 Where oft she wanders, when the Star of
 Eve
 Lights up the Hour of Love.

THYRSIS to AMORET.

FAIR, that you may truly know
 What you unto *Thyrsis* owe ;
 I will tell you how I do
Sacharissa love and you.

Joy salutes me when I set
My blest Eyes on *Amoret* :
But with Wonder I am struck,
When I on the other look.

If sweet *Amoret* complains,
I have Sense of all her Pains ;
But for *Sacharissa* I
Do not only grieve, but die.

All that of myself is mine ;
Lovely *Amoret*, is thine ;
Sacharissa's Captive fain
Would untie his Iron Chain ;
And those scorching Beams to shun,
To thy gentle Shadow run.

If the Soul had free Election
To dispose of her Affection,

I would

I would not thus long have borne
 Haughty *Sacharissa's* Scorn :
 But 'tis sure some Power Above,
 Which controuls our Will in Love.

If not Love, a strong Desire
 To create and spread that Fire,
 In my Breast sollicit me,
 Beauteous *Amoret*, for Thee.

'Tis Amazement more than Love,
 Which her radiant Eyes do move ;
 If less Splendor wait on thine,
 Yet they so benignly shine,
 I would turn my dazzled Sight
 To behold their milder Light.

But as hard 'tis to destroy
 That high Flame as to enjoy :
 Which how easily I may do,
 Heaven, as easily scaled, does know.

Amoret, as sweet and good
As the most delicious Food,
Which, but tasted, does impart
Life and Gladness to the Heart.

Sacharissa's Beauty's Wine
Which to Madness doth incline ;
Such a Liquor as no Brain
That is mortal, can sustain.

Scarce can I to Heaven excuse
The Devotion, which I use
Unto that adored Dame ;
For 'tis not unlike the same,
Which I thither ought to send,
So that if it could take End ;
'Twould to Heaven itself be due
To succeed her, and not you,
Who already have of me
All that's not Idolatry ;

Which,

Which, though not so fierce a Flame,
Is longer like to be the same.

Then smile on me, and I will prove
Wonder is shorter-lived than Love.

— — — — —
BENEATH the sacred Shade of that fair
Tree,
From *Sidney's* Birth that marks the Flight
of Time,
Thus framed the Bard his easy artful Lay,
And left, as heedless, there. From waisting
Dews
The Doves of *Venus* with their sheltering
Wings
The soft Impressions saved; till the fair
Star,
That lights the Hour of Love, and lonely
musing,
Led *Sacharissa* on her wonted Way
To

To *Sidney's* sacred Tree—She saw, she read;
And twice she felt the soothing Charm of
Power,

And twice the Sense of Conquest on her
Cheek

Sate in an Orient Blush. Even Jealousy
She seemed to feel, when in his closing
Strain

Her Captive feigned to fly—Ah, Shepherd,
then,

For Thee what Triumph! —Triumph —
short and vain!

'Tis Art, she cried; O Insolence of Art,
And smooth Design, to catch the wareless
Ear

Of unsuspecting Virgins! soothing Strains,
Insidious Flattery, hence! From her fair
Hand

The folded Paper fell—yet, parting Sighs
Swelled her fair Bosom, and with Voice
more soft

Than

Than Echo's, when she caught the dy-
ing Plaint

Of young *Narcissus*, parting, she resumed—
But for *Sacharissa* I

Do not only grieve, but die.

From the deep Covert of a lonely Shade,
Where rambling wild Vines bound the
Osier Spray,

Th' impatient Lover sprung—Ah, despe-
rate Youth!

Sure Ruin follows that rash Deed—Un-
marked

By Thee, the sweet Infection should have
stolen

Through her unconscious Heart—awaked,
alarmed,

The Magic works no more: With swifter
Steps

Not *Daphne* fled from thy mistaken Master,
Like thee precipitately lost—Yet still

One

60 L E T T E R VI.

One Hope remains : Defend her injured
Fame :

The Love of Power, the Love of Pleasure
yields

To that prevailing Honesty of Pride

Which spurns at Envy's Falshood——

*On the Misreport of SACHA-
RISSA's being painted.*

AS when a sort of Wolves infest the
Night

With their wild Howlings at fair *Cynthia's*
Light,

The Noise may chase sweet Slumber from
our Eyes,

But never reach the Mistrefs of the Skies :

So with the News of *Sacharissa's* Wrongs,

Her Servants vexed blame those envious
Tongues ;

Call

Call Love to Witness, that no painted Fire
 Can scorch Men so, or kindle such Desire:
 While unconcerned, she seems moved no
 more,
 With this new Malice, than our Loves
 before;
 But from the Height of her great Mind
 looks down
 On both our Passions, without Smile or
 Frown:
 So little Care of what is done Below
 Hath the bright Dame whom Heaven af-
 fecteth so.
 Paints her, 'tis true, with the same Hand
 which spreads
 Like glorious Colours o'er the flowery
 Meads
 When lavish Nature with her best Attire
 Clothes the gay Spring, the Season of De-
 fire.

Paints

Paints her, 'tis true, and does her Cheek
adorn

With the same Art, wherewith she paints
the Morn:

With the same Art wherewith she gildeth
so

Those painted Clouds that form *Trauman-*
tia's Bow.

*Desunt cætera * * * * **

L E T.

L E T T E R VII.

ST. EVREMOND *to* WALLER.

THE Statue of the *Cretan Jupiter* was without Ears; and the Reason one of the ancient Mythologists gives for it is, that the Governor of the Universe, whose Care is over the Whole, should not be supposed to be particularly attentive to any Individual. Had that Mythologist lived in these Times, and heard the Prayers of our Bigots, our Enthusiasts, and Fanatics, he might have assigned a much better Reason for *Jupiter's* Deafness. The Father of Gods and Men, might he have said,
 was

was so harraſſed by the latter with vain, ſelfiſh, impudent, abaſing, and abſurd Addreſſes, that he ordered *Mercury* to convey to them his Image without Ears; thereby ſignifying how little they had to hope from their impertinent Petitions.

It is obſervable that God is never ſo much blaſphemed as when Men are moſt religious. It is then that they ſo liberally inveſt him with their peculiar Follies, Paſſions, and Prejudices. The Creator of the Universe muſt be of a Party, a Sect, or Faction. He muſt be particularly their God, or he is no God. His Attributes and Qualities muſt be ſuch as are moſt likely

likely to serve their proper Purposes : If their Way be through Heaps of Slain, he must go before them. The Blood of his Creatures must be shed for his Glory ; and he who has declared that his Delight is in Mercy more than Sacrifice, is not allowed to be served or gratified in his own Way. The *Scots* Fanatics, after the Loss of a Battle, gave him a very warm Reception. They remonstrated with great Spirit against his Conduct towards the Saints, and intimated, that whatever Right he might have to their Allegiance as the Lord, he was but a poor Politician, and had very little Idea of his own Interest. “ For our Parts, (said they,)

it is but a small thing for us to lose our Lands and Inheritance ; but for the Lord's Flock to be lessened, his Glory set at nought, and his People trodden under Foot ; this shews a strange Negligence somewhere."

Prayers and Addresses conceived in such a Spirit as this, surely approach very near Blasphemy ; but it is true in religious as well as in social Life, that too much Familiarity begets Contempt. The Lord must not look for very much Respect from those with whom he vouchsafes to be so intimate.

The

The Marquis of *Halifax* used to say, that the common People would not believe in God at all, unless they were permitted to believe wrong in him. I doubt not the Truth of his Observation; but I am of Opinion, that there are some Modes of Faith worse than Infidelity, and that Fana-ticism is a more dangerous thing than Irreligion.

L E T T E R VIII.

WALLER to ST. EVREMOND.

THE Duchefs of R——, whom you once pleased fo much by telling her that ſhe was deſcended from *Leda*, has lately given us a Proof that you miſtook her Anceſtry, and that ſhe is more nearly allied to *Medea*. While ſhe amused herſelf with harmleſs Extravagancies, with Dreams of Knight-Errantry and heroic Love, her Follies were entertaining. Nothing more pleaſant than to find her by Moonlight reposing under an Oak near the old Caſtle, with a flaming Crescent on her Head, in the
Cha-

L E T T E R VIII. 69

Character of *Dian*; while my poor Lord Duke, under the Burthen of his Infirmities, was condemned to hobble up to her, and personate *Endymion*. These are things which, as the Poet says, *Jove* laughs at. One of her late Adventures was of a more serious Cast.

A certain itinerant Philosopher, a profound Adept in the occult Sciences, recommended to her the Merit of his Art, and found no great Difficulty in persuading her, that it was in his Power to restore her to Youth and Beauty. The Process he recommended was somewhat different from the Operation that *Æson* was supposed

to undergo. A fat, well-grown, well-looking young Fellow was to be found out for the Purpose, drawn, quartered, and distilled, into the Quintessence of Juvenility. A Son of one of her Grace's Tenants was pitched upon as a proper Subject, but the Philosopher deeming him not quite fat enough, he was put up for a short Time to feed. The richest Food of every Kind was procured for him, and he was confined to an Apartment just large enough to contain his Bed, that he might not impair his Corpulence by Exercise. The poor Man's Curiosity was naturally excited by such extraordinary Instances of her Grace's

Grace's Goodness, and one Day seeing the Duke's Fool before his Window, he asked him the Meaning of it. " Do not you see that Turkey in the " Coop? (said the Fool;) you are " kept here for the same Purpose. " The Duchess is sick of Fish and " Butchers Meat, and she intends to " eat you." This Information had such an Effect upon the intended Victim, that he presently pined away, and the Philosopher, thinking him an improper Subject, he was dismissed. Another was soon fixed upon, but the King being informed of the Matter, and fearing the Consequence of her Grace's Absurdity, commanded

her to give up her Chemistry, and her Philosopher to be hanged.

This ridiculous Affair has led me into many serious Reflections on the Errors of the Mind. 'Tis obvious from this, as well as a thousand other Instances, how much every Species of Enthusiasm destroys the Power of moral Reason. From that Source sprung all this poor Woman's Absurdities. Her Passion for the high Romance absorbed every other Principle. The Sense of Justice, Honour, Truth, and Decency was totally overborne. So it is in Religious, so it is in Political Systems: Let us once become Enthusiasts;

fiasts; there is nothing so wicked we will not do for Religion, nothing so impolitic we will not attempt for our Country.

L E T-

LETTER IX.

WALLER to ST. EVREMOND.

I NEVER think of the glorious Fate of ancient Genius, without a Sigh that rises from the most sensible Part of my Soul. You have an Expression in your Language, *Je meurs d'Envie*, which is descriptive of what I feel. To be carried down the Current of Time, my *St. Evremond*, undestroyed by the Wrecks of Two Thousand Years! To have our best Productions, the Productions of the Mind, confirm and maintain their Existence in the Souls of surviving Ages, when our Ashes have been

been so long the Sport of Winds,
that even the Winds cannot find
them! Heavens! what Glory is in
the Hope! My Soul is on Fire at
the Prospect! The Spirit of this Am-
bition is irresistible! It is Inchant-
ment! It is Magic!

But oh! my Friend, it is Delu-
sion; it is Vanity! The fugitive
State of modern Language forebodes
Destruction to every thing that is
conveyed in it. Your Wit, your
Elegance of Thought, your Vivacity
of Imagination will share the same
Fate with my trifling Strains, and be
involved in the impenetrable Mass of
obsolete Expression.

Your

Your Language seems, indeed, to be somewhat nearer a Period of Perfection than that in which I am obliged to write. You begun more early to refine, and Phrazeological Criticism was more cultivated in your Country. Yet the Time, I apprehend, is at no great Distance, when our harsher and heavier Periods will lose the Stiffness and Formality of their March, and acquire an Air of Grace and Delicacy, without being impaired in their Strength. Whenever that *Æra* shall arrive, the *English* Language will be in a State of comparative Excellence, beyond which it will be hazardous for it to go. For, should it once depart from
its

its characteristic Simplicity, and affect a pompous and inflated Diction, that will prove a certain Symptom of its Decay.

It is to be feared that our Language will have the same Fate which that of *Rome* had formerly. Men of vain Minds and weak Judgments will think it a Merit at least to be singular. For this Purpose they will depart from Nature, and, instead of pursuing her plain and easy Walks, will ride like *Sancho* and his unfortunate Master through Sulphur, Smoke, and Clouds.

The

The Genius of your Language sets this Danger at a greater Distance from you ; but when ill-judging Writers rise up amongst us, I am afraid that it will be the Fate of the *English* Tongue to perish, like *Samson*, by a fatal Exertion of its own Strength.

LET-

L E T T E R X.

ST. EVREMOND *to* WALLER.

WHEN the Prince of *Condé*
 was in Prison, the Princess
 headed his Party in *Normandy*; and
 as that great General amused himself
 in a little Garden adjoining to his A-
 partments, he used to say pleasantly,
 that whilst he was watering Pinks,
 his Wife was making War. My Oc-
 cupations, since I quitted those of the
 Field, have, I think, been of much
 the same Consequence, and have an-
 swered much the same Purpose. When
 I had done with making War, I be-
 took myself to making Songs, and
 making

making Love. When they would no longer let me fight in *France*, I fate down to write Verses in *England*, and took up the *belle* Passion for the sole End of inspiriting and embellishing my Poetry.

At first I looked upon my Exile as the worst of Evils ; but for these many Years past I have been in Doubt whether, on the whole, my Life has been a Loser by it or not. If the Pursuits of Wealth, of Court Distinctions, and military Glory have nothing more important in them than those of Poetry and Love, I have even profited by the Exchange. For the Labours, the Anxieties and Difficulties

ficulties necessarily attending the former darken many an Hour that might otherwise have passed, if not in Pleasure, at least in Tranquillity.

If the Delight I have experienced in the Cultivation of a successful Amour has not been equal to that of a General after Victory, neither was it attended with those painful Reflections, which the very Means and Circumstances of Conquest, must give to a Mind that has the least Sensibility. For my own Part, when I bore Arms, though I never went into the Field of Battle without Pleasure, I never quitted it without Tears. A strange, ferocious kind of Joy that

must be, which arises from beholding the Bodies of the Brave, either in Death, or in Chains. The glorious Man I have just mentioned used to suffer the greatest Distress, when he saw a gallant Enemy mortally wounded. My Victories, he would say, give me more Pain than the severest Duties of Command.

From these, and many other Inconveniencies, I was set free, when I was no longer retained in the military Service of *France*. The Abuse and Ingratitude that FORTUNE meets with in the World are utterly indefensible. How often have I accused her of Severity, in Instances where
she

He was most effectually serving me !
 In the Protection and Beneficence of
 a Monarch, I have, in this happy
 Country, long enjoyed both Security
 and Support. When deprived of
 every Post of Profit and Honour in
 my own Nation, the Transition was
 only from a Life of Labour and Ser-
 vice, to a State of Ease and Freedom ;
 where my Hours were my own, and
 I was left to the Pursuit of such Ob-
 jects as might amuse me most. I
 found in the refined Philosophy of
 Taste and the *Belles Lettres*, in the
 Cultivation of Wit and Gallantry, in
 the Religion of Love and Beauty, and
 in the Conversation and Favour of the
 most distinguished Persons of the Age,

Materials of Happiness sufficient for the whole Circle of Time.

Yet in the Language and Memory of those few Friends I have in *France*, I am still *pauvre St. Evremond!* *comment malheureux!* You will be happy when I assure you, that, whatever I might once have wished, there is not one of these compassionate Persons with whom I would change my Station.

LET-

L E T T E R XI.

WALLER *to* ST. EVREMOND.

THERE is a Passage in *Aristotle* concerning the Island of *Sicily*, which I never recollect without the greatest Pleasure. It is observable, says the Philosopher, that the Earth and Air of this Country are so impregnated with the Odour of its Flowers, that the Dogs have no Power to trace the Scent in hunting. Enter into the Heathen Theology, and this gives you quite a new and most amiable Idea of the Queen of Flowers. Supposing her to be one of the tutelary Deities of the Island, she is thus

concerned for the Preservation and Security of the innocent Animals that inhabit it.

I never had any enthusiastic Enjoyment so great as this, and many other Circumstances attending this once celebrated Country, inspired me with. When I was upon the Continent, my Curiosity naturally led me to visit a Place which had been the Repository of Arts and Arms, the Grainary of the World, the Prize of contending Empires, the Seat of the Muses, but particularly the Birth-place of Pastoral Poetry.

Of

Of these fair Scenes what Monuments
remain !

A burning Mountain, and a barren
Plain !

Yet there are some few Parts of the
Island that still bear the Marks of its
ancient Fertility and Beauty ; parti-
cularly that Part which answers to the
beautiful Description of *Theocritus*,
where an extensive Lawn of Pastu-
rage stretches from the Mountains to
the Sea. I imagined that I had found
the very Rock, under the Shadow of
which his Shepherd is represented sit-
ting with his Shepherdess in his Arms,
and looking with Complacency on his
Flocks, as they fed towards the Sea.

Enchanted with the Idea, I was carried headlong into Verse, and carved upon a neighbouring Beech something like the Stanzas that follow :

SWEET Land of Muses ! o'er whose
favoured Plains

Ceres and *Flora* held alternate Sway ;
By *Jove* refreshed with Life - diffusing
Rains,

By *Phœbus* blest with every kinder Ray !

O with what Pride do I those Times survey,

When Freedom, by her rustic Min-
strels led,

Danced on the Green Lawn many a Sum-
mer's Day,

While Pastoral Ease reclined her care-
less Head,

In

LETTER XI. 89

In these soft Shades ; ere yet that Shep-
herd fled,
Whose Music pierced Earth, Air, and
Heaven and Hell,
And called the ruthless Tyrant of the
Dead
From the dark Slumbers of his Iron
Cell,

His Ear unfolding caught the Magic
Spell :
He felt the Sounds glide softly through
his Heart ;
The Sounds that deigned of Love's sweet
Power to tell ;
And as they told, would point his Gol-
den Dart.

Fixed was the God ; nor Power had he
to part,
For the fair Daughter of the Sheaf-
crowned Queen,

Fair

90 L E T T E R X I.

Fair without Pride, and lovely without
Art,

Gathered her wild Flowers on the dai-
sied Green.

He saw ; he sigh'd ; and that unmelting
Breast,

Which arms the Hand of Death, the
Power of Love confessed.

L E T -

LETTER XII.

ST. EVREMOND *to* WALLER.

* THE Letter I wrote to poor *Mazarin*, to dissuade her from entering on the Conventual Life, has not yet been in any other Hands. That, and the Stanzas on the same Subject, I have reserved amongst those private Pledges of Tenderneſs and Friendſhip which the Memory of a

* This Letter, and the Stanzas that follow it, are the only Pieces in this Collection that have appeared before. Mr. *Waller's* Tranſlation has never been printed ; and the Originals do ſo much Honour to *St. Evremond*, that the Editor thought he ſhould conſult both his Reputation, and the Entertainment of the Public, by inserting them.

beloved

beloved Object makes of much Consequence to ourselves, though they may be of little or none to others. I will give them up to you, notwithstanding ; but on Condition that you shall make them something better than they are, by returning them cloathed in your own Language.

L E T T R E

A Madame la Duchesse MAZARINE,

*Sur la dessein qu'elle avoit de se retirer
dans un Couvent.*

* *

* *

* *

COMMENT est-il possible que vous
quittiez des gens que vous char-
mez et qui vous adorent, des amis
que

que vous aiment mieux qu'ils ne s'aiment eux-mêmes, pour aller chercher des inconnus qui vous déplairont, et dont vous ferez peut-être outragée ? Songez vous, Madame, que vous vous jetez dans un Couvent, que Madame la Connetable avoit en horreur. Si elle y rentre, c'est qu'il y faut rentrer ou mourir ; sa captivité presente, toute affreuse qu'elle est, lui semble moins dure que cet infortuné séjour ; et pour y aller, Madame, vous voulez quitter une Cour où vous etes estimée, ou l'affection d'un Roi doux et honnête vous traite si bien, ou toutes les personnes raisonnables ont du respect et de l'amitié pour vous. Le jour le plus heureux que

vous

vous passerez dans le Couvent ne vaudra pas le plus triste que vous passerez dans votre maison.

Encore si vous etiez touchée d'une Grace particuliere de Dieu, qui vous attachât a son service, on excuseroit la dureté de votre condition, par l'ardeur de votre zele qui vous rendroit tout supportable : mais je ne vous trouve pas persuadée, et il vous faut apprendre à croire celui que vous allez servir si durement. Vous trouverez toutes les peines des Religieuses, et ne trouverez point cet Epoux qui les console. Tout Epoux a vous est odieux, et dans le couvent et dans le monde. Doubter un jour de
la

la félicité de l'autre vie est affez pour defefperer la plus fainte fille d'un couvent ; car la Foi feule la fortifié, et la rend capable de fupporter les mortifications qu'elle fe donne. Qui fait, Madame, fi vous croirez un quart-d'heure ce qu'il faut qu'elle croye toujours, pour n'être pas malheureux ? Qui fait fi l'idée d'un bonheur promis aura jamais la force de vous fôutenir contre les fentimens de maux prefens.

Il n'y a rien de plus raifonnable à des gens veritablement perfuadés que de vivre dans l'aufterité, qu'ils croient neceffaire pour arriver à la poffeffion d'un bien éternel ; et rien de plus
fage

sage à ceux qui ne le sont pas, que de prendre ici leurs commodités, et de goûter avec moderation tous les plaisirs ou ils sont sensibles. C'est la raison pourquoi les Philosophes qui ont crû l'immortalité de l'ame, ont compté pour rien toutes les douceurs de ce monde ; et que ceux qui n'attendoient rien après la mort, ont mis le souverain bien dans la volupté. Pour vous, Madame, vous avez une philosophie toute nouvelle. Opposée à Epicure, vous cherchez les peines, les mortifications, les douleurs. Contraire à Socrate, vous n'attendez aucune récompense de la vertu. Vous vous faites religieuse sans beaucoup de religion : Vous méprisez ce monde ici, et

vous

vous ne faites pas grand cas de l'autre. A moins que vous n'en ayiez trouvé un troisième fait pour vous, il n'y a pas moyen justifier votre conduite.

Il faut, Madame, il faut se persuader avant que de se contraindre : Il ne faut pas souffrir sans savoir pour qui l'on souffre. En un mot, il faut travailler sérieusement a connoître Dieu avant que de renoncer à soi-même. C'est au milieu de l'univers que la contemplation des merveilles de la nature vous fera connoître celui dont elle depend. La vûe du soleil vous fera connoître la grandeur et la magnificence de celui qui l'a formé. Cet ordre, si merveilleux et si juste, qui

lie et entretient toutes choses, vous donnera la connoissance de sa sagesse. Enfin, Madame, dans ce monde que vous quittez, Dieu est tout ouvert, et tout expliqué à nos pensées. Il est si refferré dans les monasteres, qu'il se cache au lieu de se decouvrir; si deguisé par les basses et indignes figures qu'on lui donne, que les plus éclairés ont de la peine à le reconnoitre. Cependant une vieille supérieure ne vous parlera que de lui, et ne connoîtra rien moins : Elle vous commandera des sottises, et une exacte obeissance suivra toujours le commandement, quelque ridicule qu'il puisse etre. Le Directeur ne prendra pas moins d'ascendant sur vous, et votre raison humiliée

miliée se verra soumise à une ignorance presomptueuse. La Raison, ce caractère secret, cette image de Dieu que nous portons en nos ames, vous fera passer pour rebelle, si vous ne reverez l'imbecillité de la nature humaine en ce directeur. De bonnes sœurs trop simples vous dégoûteront ; des libertines vous donneront du scandale : vous verrez les crimes du monde : Hélas ! vous en aurez quitté les plaisirs.

Jusqu'ici vous avez vécu dans les grandeurs, et dans les délices ; vous avez été élevée en Reine, et vous méritiez de l'être. Devenue héritière du Ministre qui gouvernoit l'univers,

vous avez eu plus de bien en mariage, que toutes les Reines de l'Europe ensemble n'en ont porté aux Rois leurs epoux. Un jour vous a enlevé tous ces biens ; mais votre mérite vous a tenu lieu de votre fortune, et vous a fait vivre plus magnifiquement dans les pays etrangers que vous n'eussiez vécu dans le nôtre. La curiosité, la delicateffe, la propreté, le soïn de votre personne, les commodites, les plaisirs ne vous ont pas abandonnée ; et si votre discretion vous a defendu des voluptés, vous avez cet avantage, que jamais faveurs n'ont été si desirées que les vôtres.

Que

Que trouverez vous, Madame, ou vous allez ? Vous trouverez une defence rigoureuse de tout ce que demande raisonnablement la nature, de tout ce qui est permis a l'humanité. Une cellule, un méchant lit, un plus detestable repas, des habits sales et puants remplaceront vos délices. Vous ferez seule a vous servir, seule a vous plaire, au milieu de tant de choses que vous déplairont ; et peut-être ne ferez vous pas en état d'avoir pour vous la plus secrète complaisance de l'amour propre ; peut-être que votre beauté devenue toute inutile, ne se decouvra, ni à vos yeux, ni à ceux des autres.

Cependant, Madame, cette beauté si merveilleuse, ce grand ornement de l'univers, ne vous a pas été donnée pour le cacher. Vous vous devez au public, a vos amis, a vous-même. Vous êtes faite pour vous plaire, pour plaire à tous, pour dissiper la tristesse, inspirer la joie, pour ranimer généralement tout ce qui languit. Quand les laides et les imbécilles se jettent dans les couvens, c'est une inspiration divine qui leur fait quitter le monde, ou elles ne paroissent que pour faire honte a leur Auteur. Sur votre sujet, Madame, c'est une vraie tentation du Diable, lequel, envieux de la gloire de Dieu, ne peut souffrir l'admiration que nous donne son plus bel ouvrage.

ouvrage. Vingt ans de Pseaumes et de Cantiques chantés dans le chœur ne feront pas tant pour cette gloire, comme un seul jour que votre beauté sera exposée aux yeux des hommes. Vous montrer est votre veritable vocation : c'est le culte le plus propre que vous puissiez lui rendre. Si le temps a pouvoir d'effacer vos traits, comme il efface ceux des autres, s'il ruine un jour cette beauté que nous admirons, retirez vous alors ; et apres avoir accompli la volonté de celui qui a formée, allez chanter ses louanges dans le couvent. Mais suivez la disposition qu'il a faite de votre vie ; car si vous prevenez l'heure qu'il a destinée pour votre retraite,

vous trahirez ses intentions, par une
secrete complaisance pour son en-
nemi.

Un de vos grands malheurs, Ma-
dame, si vous ecoutez cet ennemi,
c'est que vous n'aurez a vous prendre
de tous vos maux qu'a vous-même.
Madame la Connetable rejette les fi-
ens sur la violence qu'on lui fait.
Elle a les cruautés d'un mari qui la
force, l'injustice d'une cour qu'ap-
puye son mari : elle a mille objets,
vrais ou faux, qu'elle peut accuser.
Vous n'avez que vous, Madame,
pour cause de votre infortune. Vous
n'avez a condamner que votre erreur.
Dieu vous explique ses volontes par
ma

ma bouche, et vous ne m'écoutez pas. Il se sert de mes raisons pour vous sauver, et vous ne consultez que vous pour vous perdre. Un jour accablée de tous les maux que je vous depeins, vous songerez, mais trop tard, à celui qui a voulu les empêcher.

Peut-être êtes-vous flattée de bruit que fera votre retraite, et par une vanité extravagante, vous croyez qu'il n'y a rien de plus illustre que de dérober au monde la plus grande beauté qu'on y vit jamais, quand les autres ne donnent à Dieu qu'une laideur naturelle, ou les ruines d'un visage tout effacé. Mais depuis quand préférez
vous

vous l'erreur de l'opinion a la réalité des choses ? Et qui vous a dit, apres tout, que votre resolution ne paroitra pas aussi folle qu'extraordinaire ? Qui vous a dit qu'on ne la prendra pas pour le retour d'une humeur errante et voyageuse ? qu'on ne croira pas que vous voulez faire trois cens de lieues pour chercher une avanture, celeste, si vous voulez, mais toujours une espece d'avanture ?

Je ne doute point que vous n'esperiez trouver beaucoup de douceur dans l'entretien de Madame la Connetable ; mais, si je ne me trompe, cette douceur la finira bientôt. Apres avoir parlé trois ou quatre jours de la
France,

France, et de l'Italie, apres avoir parlé de la passion du Roi, et de la timidité de Monsieur votre oncle, et de ce que vous avez pensé etre, et de ce que vous etes devenue : apres avoir epuisé le souvenir de la maison de Monsieur le Connetable, de votre sortie de Rome, et du malheureux succès de vos voyages, vous vous trouverez enfermée dans un couvent ; et votre captivité, dont vous commencerez a sentir la rigueur, vous fera songer a la douce liberté, que vous aurez goûtée en Angleterre. Les choses qui vous paroissent ennuyeuses aujourd'hui, se presenteront avec des charmes ; et ce que vous aurez quittée par degout, reviendra
folli-

solliciter votre envie. Alors, Madame, alors, de quelle force d'esprit n'aurez-vous pas besoin, pour vous consoler de maux présens et des biens perdus ?

Je veux que mes pénétrations soient fausses et mes conjectures mal fondées ; je veux que la conversation de Madame la Connétable ait toujours de grands agrémens pour vous : mais qui vous dira que vous en pourrez jouir librement ? Une des maximes des couvens est de ne souffrir aucune liaison entre des personnes qui se plaignent, parce que l'union des particuliers est une espece de detachment des obligations contractées avec l'ordre.

D'ail-

D'ailleurs, les soins de Monsieur le Connétable pourront bien s'étendre jusqu'à empêcher une communication qui fait tout craindre à un homme soupçonneux qui a trop offensé. Je ne parle point des caprices d'une supérieure, ni des secrettes jalousies des religieuses, qui voudront nuire à une personne, dont le mérite confondra le leur. Ainsi, Madame, vous vous ferez faite religieuse pour vivre avec Madame la Connétable, et il arrivera que vous ne la verrez presque pas. Vous ferez, donc, ou seule avec vos tristes imaginations, ou dans la foule, parmi les sottises, et les erreurs, ennuyée des sermons en langue que vous fera peu connue, fatiguée
des

des Matins qui auront troublé votre repos, lassée d'une habitude continuelle du chant des Vêpres, et du murmure importune de quelque Ro-faire.

Quelle parti prendre, Madame ?
 Conservez votre raison : Vous vous rendrez malheureuse si vous la perdez.
 Quelle perte de n'avoir plus ce discernement si exquis, et cette intelligence si rare ! Avez-vous commis un si grand crime contre vous, que vous devez vous punir aussi rigoureusement que vous faites ? Et quel sujet de plainte avez vous contre vos amis, pour exercer sur eux une si cruelle vengeance ? Les Italiens assassinent
 leurs

leurs ennemis : mais leurs amis se fauvent de la justice sauvage qu'ils se veulent faire.

Mademoiselle de Beverweert et moi avons déjà eu les coups mortels : la pensée de vos maux a fait les nôtres, et je me trouve aujourd'hui le plus misère de tous les hommes, parceque vous allez vous rendre la plus malheureuse des toutes les femmes. Quand je vais voir Mademoiselle de Beverweert les Matins, nous nous regardons un quart-d'heure sans parler ; et ce triste silence est toujours accompagné de nos larmes. Ayez pitié de nous, Madame, si vous n'en avez de vous-même. On peut se priver des commodités de la vie pour l'amour de ses amis :

amis : nous vous demandons que vous vous priviez des tourmens, et nous ne saurions l'obtenir. Il faut que vous ayez une dureté bien naturelle, puisque vous êtes la première à en ressentir les effets. Songez, Madame, songez sérieusement à ce que je vous dis : vous êtes sur le bord du precipice ; un pas en avant, vous êtes perdue ; un pas en arrière, vous êtes en pleine sûreté. Vos biens et vos maux dependent de vous. Ayez la force de vouloir être heureuse, et vous la ferez.

Si vous quittez le monde, comme vous semblez vous y preparer, ma consolation est que je n'y demeurerai pas long-temps. La nature, plus favorable que vous, finira bientôt ma
triste

triste vie. Cependant, Madame, vos ordres previeendront les siens, quand il vous plaira ; car les droits qu'elle se garde sur moi ne vont qu'après ceux que je vous y a donnees. Il n'est point de voyage que je n'entreprenne ; et si pour derniere rigueur, vous n'y voulez pas consentir, je me cacherais dans un désert, dégouté de toute autre commerce que le votre. Là, votre idée me tiendra lieu des tous objets : là je me detacherai de moi-même, s'il est permis de parler ainsi, pour penser eternellement à vous : là, j'apprendrai à tout ce monde ce qu'auront pu sur moi, le charme de votre merite, et la force de ma douleur.

SENTIMENS *de Madame la*
Duchesse MAZARIN, qui se con-
sacre a Dieu.

S T A N C E S.

S AINTS et sacrés ennuis, salutaire
 tristesse,

Dégouts dont mon Esprit est occupé sans
 cesse,

Chassez les vains desirs qui restent dans
 mon cœur ;

Eteignez dans mon sein le sentiment des
 vices ;

Eteignez l'appétit de mes fausses deli-
 lices,

Et faites que le Ciel aujourd'hui soit vain-
 queur.

ME

I

C'est

C'est pour lui désormais que j'ai dessein de
vivre.

Vous m'attirez, Seigneur ; Seigneur, il
faut vous suivre ;

Vous aurez tous mes soins, vous aurez mon
amour :

A vos loix seulement je vais être affer-
vie ;

Et je veux bien donner le reste de ma
vie

Au Dieu dont la bonté m'a sù donner le
jour.

Ce Dieu qui me forma si charmante et si
belle,

A borné ses faveurs, et me laisse mor-
telle.

Malgré tout le pouvoir qui donne à mes
appas,

116 L E T T E R XII.

Le temps effacera les traits de mon visage ;

Et l'Esprit, de ce Dieu la plus vivante image,

Echappera lui seul aux rigueurs de trespas.

Quelle bonheur est certain d'une longue durée ?

Quelle condition nous peut-être assurée ?

Qui peut nous garantir des injures du fort ?

On ne possède rien qui ne soit périssable :

Souvent le plus heureux devient si misérable,

Qu'il semble avoir besoin du secours de la mort.

J'ai

J'ai connu tous les biens qu'apporte la
fortune ;

J'ai connu la grandeur, et sa pompe im-
portune ;

En amour, pour les Moins, j'ai connu les
desirs ;

Des fausses vanités j'ai fait l'experi-
ence ;

Et je connois enfin qu'une heure d'in-
nocence

Vaut mieux qu'un siecle entier de fri-
voles plaisirs,

Faites, faites, Seigneur, que vos saintes
lumières

Dissipent l'ignorance, et les erreurs gros-
sières

Dont mon esprit confus étoit envelop-
pé.

118 LETTRE XII.

Le monde est un trompeur ; Dieu seul
est véritable,

Je n'espere qu'en lui, je ne suis plus ca-
pable

De me laisser surprendre à ce qui m'a
trompé.

Temps ou se doit fixer ma longue in-
certitude,

Lieux qui devez finir ma triste inquié-
tude,

Quand me donnerez-vous ce repos sou-
haité ?

Je délibere encor, jour et nuit je con-
sulte

Si je dois préférer vos douceurs au tu-
multe :

C'en est fait, lieux sacrés, vous l'avez
emporté.

O vous,

O vous, Maître absolu de la terre et de
l'onde,

Vous, dont l'ordre secret gouverne tout
le monde,

Voudrez vous bien, Seigneur, devenir
mon epoux ?

Celui qu'on me donna n'est pas digne de
l'être,

C'est vous seul aujourd'hui qui je veux
reconnoître.

Mes liens sont rompus, et je suis toute
à vous.

Vieux et tristes liens, causes de tant de
larmes,

Peut-être que sans vous le monde eut eu
ses charmes ;

Mais le monde avec vous est aisément
vaincu.

Je ferai désormais en quelque soli-
tude,

D'un doux et saint repos une paisible
étude,

Et compterai pour rien le temps que j'ai
vécu.

Palais, meubles, habits, folle magnifi-
cence,

Jeu, repas, vains sujets de luxe et de
dépense,

Je vous dis maintenant un eternal a-
dieu :

Beaux cheveux, doux liens ou s'engage-
oient les ames,

Qui prenoient en mes yeux les amou-
reuses flâmes,

Beaux cheveux, je vous coupe, et vous
consacre a DIEU.

Un

Un voile pour jamais va couvrir mon
visage,

Et ma beauté cachée y perdra tout u-
sage

De ce charme trompeur qui fait flatter
les sens :

Un amant y perdra la sujet de sa
peine :

Je vais perdre les noms d'*ingrate* et d'*in-
humaine*,

Et les maux qu'en secret, moi-même je
ressens.

Je vous degage, amans, des loix de mon
empire :

Pour des objets nouveaux si votre cœur
souponne :

Je ne me plaindra point d'une infidé-
lité :

J'ai-

J'aimerois mieux pourtant — que les
femmes font vaines !

J'aimerois vous voir au sortir des mes
chaines,

Jouer paisiblement de votre liberté.

J'aimerois mieux encor que votre ame
fidèle

De sa premiere ardeur formât un nou-
veau zèle,

Qui nous tiendrait unis même apres le
trépas.

De ce nouvel amour sentez l'heureuse
atteinte ;

Vous m'aimâtes profane, aimez - moi
comme sainte,

Et suivez mes vertus au lieu de mes
appas.

Mais

Mais des adieux si longs aux amans que
l'on quitte,

Montrent notre foiblesse, ou marquent
leur mérite :

C'est un reste secret des profanes a-
mours,

Permettez, Lieux divins, quelque hu-
maine tendresse,

Pour ceux qui m'ont aimée, et qu'au-
jourd'hui je laisse,

Ils ne me verront plus, et vous m'aurez
toujours.

A Monf.

A Mons. de ST. EVREMOND.

SUJET, triste sujet, qui pleurez
mon absence,
Pourquoi me plaignez-vous, quand mon
bonheur commence,
C'est à vous seulement que vous devez
des pleurs ;
Je ne menerai plus cet vie incertaine
Dont vous fûtes témoin ; et finissant ma
peine,
Je vous donne un exemple à finir vos
malheurs.

La retraite à vôtre âge est toujours né-
cessaire ;
Avec tant de beauté vous me la voyez
faire,
Et vous iriez encor vous traîner dans les
cours ?

Que

Que si la voix du Ciel de tout autre
écoutée

Sur le bord de cercueil est par vos re-
jettée,

De la morale, au moins écoutez le dis-
cours.

Le Ciel est impuissant, et la raison ti-
mide

Sur vos durs sentimens trop foiblement
préfide ;

Mais vous devez encor reconnoître ma
Loi :

Retirez-vous, vieillard ; c'est moi qui
vous l'ordonne ;

Voici l'ordre dernier qu'en Reine je vous
donne ;

Vieillard, quittez le monde en même-
temps que moi.

ST. EVREMOND.

M A Reine me verroit a son ordre ;
 fidèle,
 Mais la mort où je cours m'empêche
 d'obêir ;
 Il m'est plus aisé de mourir
 Que de vivre un moment sans elle.

LET-

LETTER XIII.

WALLER to ST. EVREMOND.

THE most perfect and most persuasive Piece of Eloquence that ancient or modern Times have produced, would require a more masterly Hand than mine to do it Justice in a Translation. In passing from one Language to another, every Work suffers; but Works of Wit more than others. The peculiar Felicities of Expression are most commonly incommunicable, and the Task of the Translator is somewhat like that of the *Israelites in Egypt*, who were obliged
to

to make the same kind of Bricks with Stubble that had usually been made with Straw: It is like that of an Architect, who is to imitate with Exactness his Model, and yet must build with different Materials, which, by means of Weight or Lightness, will give his Work a different Air.—I am not mentioning these Disadvantages without the Expectation of Indulgence. Your Letter and Verses will not appear in their original Beauty, but I have endeavoured, as much as possible, to preserve your Ideas.

To

*To the Duchess of MAZARIN,
on her Design of retiring into a
Convent.*

IS it possible, then, Madam, that you should quit that Society, of which you are so justly the Admiration and Delight? Abandon the Friends that adore you! for whom? for Strangers, who want even the Capacity of giving you Pleasure; for Strangers that will give you Disgust! Reflect, Madam, that you are about to enter upon a Life which your illustrious Sister could not look upon without Horror. If she retires into a Convent, it is because the Alter-

native is Death. Her present Confinement, dreadful as it is, seems, in her Opinion, preferable to that wretched Retreat. But your Situation, how different! For, is it a Prison you exchange for a Nunnery? Is it not a Court, where you are universally respected; where you enjoy the truest and tenderest Affection of a Monarch, and where all the liberal and the sensible World receive you into their Friendship and Esteem? The happiest Day that a Convent will afford you, will not be worth the least enlivened Hours you pass at present.

Were it the Influence of some prevailing Grace that attached you wholly
to

to religious Duties, the Severities of the Life you lay before you, might find some Apology, in the Ardor of that Zeal, which would render them more supportable. But, far from the Possession of Grace, you have not even Faith : You have yet to learn to believe in that Master, for whom you are about to engage in so painful a Service. You will experience all the Hardships of religious Retirement, without finding that Spouse, by whose Consolations they are alleviated. The very Name of Spouse is odious to you, whether in a Convent or in a Court. To entertain the least Shadow of Doubt concerning the Happiness of a future Existence, were sufficient to

K 2 destroy

destroy the Peace of the most pious Sister. It is Faith alone that supports her, and reconciles her to the voluntary Mortifications of her Life. But is it certain, Madam, that you shall believe, even for one Moment, what your Happiness requires that you should believe always? Is it certain that your Confidence of future Felicity will be sufficient to support you under the Sense of present Sufferings?

For the Family of Faith, nothing can be more reasonable, than to endure those Austerities which they believe to be necessary to their eternal Welfare. But, for those who are of
different

different Sentiments, a different Oeconomy is necessary. It is *their* proper Happiness to embrace the Conveniences of Life, and to pursue, with Moderation, those Pleasures that are adapted to their Nature. It was upon this Principle, that those Philosophers, who believed the Immortality of the Soul, depreciated the Delights of this Life ; and that those, who entertained no Opinion of a future Existence, placed the Sovereign Good in Pleasure. But you, Madam, have a Philosophy of a Species altogether uncommon. Contrary to the Doctrine of *Epicurus*, the Objects of your Pursuit are Pains, and Sufferings, and Sorrows. Inconsistent with the Prin-

ciples of *Socrates*, you have no Belief in the Rewards of Virtue. You engage in a religious Life, without Religion. You set this World at naught, and yet you have no Idea of the other. It is at least necessary that a third should be created for your Purpose, were it but to justify your Conduct.

It is absolutely necessary that you should believe, before you engage. It is necessary you should know for whom you suffer, before you enter upon your Sufferings. In short, it is necessary to obtain a proper Knowledge of God, before you give up to him the Interests of your Life. It is in the visible Creation that the Contemplation

templation of the Wonders of Nature will bring you acquainted with her sublime Author. It is the Sight of the Sun that must give you an Idea of the Magnificence of Him that made it. It is that Order which is preserved in the great Chain of Created Being, that must inspire you with proper Sentiments of the astonishing Wisdom of the Creator. It is in that World you are about to forsake, where God is to be found. It is in his Works you are to read an Account of his Being. Is he to be found in the narrow Precincts of a Monastery? Far from being discovered there, is he not concealed? — So disguised by low and unworthy Images, that he is

hid even from that Intelligence he has given ?

Yet shall you continually hear of him from some aged Abbess, who will talk to you concerning him, and know nothing of him. She will command you to do the absurdest things, and her Commands must be implicitly obeyed. Your Confessor will have equally the Ascendant over you, and your humbled Reason must submit to the Tyranny of presumptuous Ignorance. Reason ! that hidden Character ! that Image of the Deity imprest upon the Soul, will make you considered in the Light of a Rebel, if you pay not the most abject Deference to
the

the Weakness of human Nature in the Person of that Confessor. The *good* Sisters will disgust you with their Infidelity ; the Libertines will expose you to Scandal. You will find yourself surrounded by the Infirmities of Life ; and, alas ! you will find that you have parted with its Pleasures.

Hitherto you have lived in Luxury and in Grandeur. You have had the Education of a Queen, and you were justly entitled to it. The Heiress of a Minister who governed the World, your Marriage Portion exceeded the united Fortunes of all the Queens in *Europe*. One fatal Day deprived you of your Possessions, but your Merit supplied

supplied the Place of Fortune, and established you in that Magnificence in a Land of Strangers, which you had hardly known in your own Country. A Love of Elegance, a natural Delicacy, a Regard for Personal Ornament, the Conveniences of Situation, and the Pleasures of Life, have not forsaken you; and if your Discretion has preserved you from other Indulgences, your Virtue has the greater Merit; for never were Favours more solicited than yours.

What is it, Madam, that you will find in a Convent? What, but a rigorous Abstinence from every innocent Indulgence that Nature may require,

quire, or Reason allow? A Cell, a wretched Bed, a more wretched Diet, and the vilest Dress, will take Place of the present Elegancies of your Life. No Servant to attend you! no Companion to entertain you! It is yourself alone that must give you Pleasure amidst a thousand Objects that will give you Disgust. And yet it is far from certain that you will retain even this Complaisance for yourself. When Captivity shall have deprived that Beauty of its Use, will the fair Possessor any longer find a Pleasure in it?

But was, then, that wonderful Beauty, the Ornament, the Boast of
Human

Human Nature, was it given you to be concealed? Do not you stand accountable for it to the World, to your Friends, to yourself? Formed, as you are, to diffuse universal Pleasure, to dispel the Gloom of Melancholy, and call forth every Idea of Joy! Let the Ugly and Infirm be shut up in Convents. The Inspiration that directs them thither is divine. It is the Voice of Nature, that bids them retire from that Society where they do no Honour to their Creator. But, in your Case, Madam, this is absolutely a Temptation of the Devil, who, envious of the Glory of God, cannot endure that Admiration with which we behold the fairest of his Works.

Believe

Believe me, twenty long Years of Psalm-singing will not contribute so much to that Glory, as the exposing your Beauties one single Day to the Eyes of the admiring World. Your proper Religion is to appear in Society. It is the best Worship you can pay to your Creator. If those Charms, like common Beauties, must submit to the Devastations of Time, then may you retire; and after having fulfilled the Design of Him that made you, may you sing his Praises in the Retreat of a Convent. But, follow the Scheme that his Providence has laid down for your Life; for, if you withdraw from Society, before the Time he has appointed, you

you will frustrate his Intentions to gratify his Enemy.

Should you listen, after all, to the Insinuations of that Enemy, it will not be one of your least Misfortunes, that you have none but yourself to charge with the Evils that fall upon you. Your illustrious Sister may lay the Blame of her Sufferings on the Violence with which she has been treated ; on the Cruelty of a Husband who compelled her, and on the Injustice of a Court, which supported that Husband. She has a thousand Causes, real or imaginary, on which she may charge her Misfortunes. You have only one, and that one is yourself.

self. You fall not by the Error, or the Injustice of others, but by your own. I am the Voice of the divine Intentions, and you will not hear me. Providence avails itself of my Reason to save you; but when your Ruin is in the Question, you will consult only yourself. Yet the Day will come, when, overborne by all the Evils I have described, you will think, but too late, of him who would have prevented them.

Possibly, you may be flattered by the Voice of public Fame and popular Curiosity, which your Retirement will undoubtedly excite. By an Extravagance of Vanity you may be induced

duced to deprive the World of the greatest Beauty it can boast ; while others consign to the Retreats of Piety nothing more, than either their natural Deformity, or the Ruins of a departed Face. But, are the Errors of Opinion, then, to take Place of Truth and Nature ? And who, after all, has had the Hardiness to assure you, that your Resolution will not appear as absurd as it is extraordinary ? Is it clear that the Resolution itself is any thing more than a transient Humour ? A Piece of holy Knight-Errantry ? Shall we not be apt to say, that the Dukes of *Mazarin* is going Three hundred Leagues in quest of an Adventure ? Of a heavenly

venly one, if you please; but still it is a Species of Adventure.

I doubt not that you hope for much Happiness in the Conversation of your illustrious Sister. But, if I am not mistaken, that Happiness will be of short Continuance. After having spent three, or four Days, in Conversation about *France* and *Italy*; concerning the Passion of the King, and the Pusillanimity of your Uncle; on what you might have expected to *be*, and on what you now *are*; after having run through every Idea of the Family of *Colonna*, of your Removal from *Rome*, and the ill Success of your Journeys, you will find yourself

in the Captivity of a Convent; and that Captivity will be rendered more painful, by the Remembrance of that delightful Liberty you enjoyed in this Land of Freedom. Even those things which you now behold with Indifference, will then have their Charms; and what you now abandon through Disgust, will then excite your Envy. What Fortitude, what Force of Mind, will be sufficient to support you? — to support you under the Sense of present Sufferings, and Blessings that are lost.

Be it supposed, my Apprehensions may be vain, and my Conjectures ill-founded! Be it supposed, you may
still

still find a Charm in the Conversation of your Sister, that shall compensate for all the Evils of your Confinement; yet is it sure that you shall have free Access to it? It is a Maxim in Convents to suffer no Connections, or Intimacies, because the Union of Individuals is considered as a kind of Revolt from the Obligations contracted with the Order. Besides, the Industry of the Prince may exert itself in this Respect, and prevent that Communication which must appear formidable to a suspicious and injurious Husband. I pass over the Caprices of an Abbess, and the secret Jealousies of the Sisterhood, ever industrious to oppress that Merit which obscures their own. Thus,

it can only be for the Society of your Sister that you enter on the religious Life; and yet, perhaps, that Sister you will hardly ever see. Your Life, therefore, will either pass in the solitary Indulgence of your own sad Thoughts, or in a Society pregnant with Follies and Absurdities; where you will be wearied with Sermons in a Language that is unknown to you, harraffed with Matins that will disturb your Rest, sickened with the dull Chanting of the same Round of Vespers, or teased with the troublesome Murmurs of some industrious Rosary.

What is it, then, you have to do, Madam? Make a right Use of your Reason:

Reason : If you attend not to it, you are undone. What a Loss ! should you no longer find the Use of that exquisite Discernment, that unrivaled Sense ! What Crime have you committed that can justify so severe a Sentence against yourself ? What Crime have your Friends committed, that they must feel the Effects of the same Severity ? It is usual for the *Italians* to assassinate their Enemies ; but their Friends are free from the savage Justice and the Vengeance they assert.

Madam *De Beverweert* and myself are truly miserable. The Sense of your Misfortunes affects us extremely ; and I am at this Moment the most wretch-

ed of Men, because you are resolved to make yourself the most unhappy of Women. In my Morning Visits to Madam *De Beverweert* we sit looking on each other in melancholy Silence, and that Silence is always accompanied with Tears. Have some Compassion for us, Madam, if you will have none for yourself. For the Advantage of our Friends do we not willingly deprive ourselves of the Comforts and Conveniences of Life? Your Friends intreat you only to give up your Miseries for their Sakes, and their Intreaties are vain.

Yet notwithstanding this more than natural Obduracy, reflect, Madam, I
intreat

intreat you, on what I have already laid before you. You are now on the Brink of a Precipice — One Step forward, and you perish unavoidably — One Step backward, and you are in perfect Safety. Your Happiness and Misery are in your own Disposal. Only resolve to be happy, and you will be so.

However, should you abandon the World, which seems at present your Intention, I have one Consolation left, that I shall not stay long in it. Nature, more merciful than you, will soon put an End to my wretched Being; yet still your Commands will take Place of her's; and the Right

she has over me will be but secondary to that I have given you. I am prepared to go whenever I shall have my Summons ; and if you, as a last Instance of your Cruelty, shall refuse, I will hide myself in some solitary Desert, and sicken at the Thought of all Society but yours. Your Idea shall take Place of every other Object, and I will retire even from myself, that I may for ever think of you. Such are the Proofs I will exhibit to the World of the Power of your Charms, and the Force of my Despair.

The

The Duchess of MAZARIN,

on her Retiring into a Convent.

YE holy Cares that haunt these lonely
Cells,

These Scenes where salutary Sadness dwells;
Ye Sighs that minute the slow wasting Day,
Ye pale Regrets that wear my Life away;
O bid these Passions for the World depart,
These wild Desires, and Vanities of Heart.
Hide every Trace of Vice, of Follies past,
And yield to Heaven the Victory at last.

To that the poor Remains of Life are due,
'Tis Heaven that calls, and I the Call pursue.
Lord of my Life, my future Cares are thine,
My Love, my Duty greet thy holy Shrine.

No

154 L E T T E R XIII.

No more my Heart to vainer Hopes I give,
But live for Thee, whose Bounty bids me
live.

The Power that gave these little Charms
their Grace,
His Favours bounded, and confined their
Space.

Spite of those Charms shall Time, with rude
Essay,

Tear from the Cheek the transient Rose
away.

But the free Mind, Ten-thousand Ages
past,

Its Maker's Form, shall with its Maker last.

Uncertain Objects still our Hopes employ ;
Uncertain all that bears the Name of Joy !

Of all that feels the Injuries of Fate

Uncertain is the Search, and short the Date.

Yet

Yet even that Boon what Thousands wish
to gain?

That Boon of Death, the sad Resource of
Pain!

Once on my Path all Fortune's Glory fell,
Her vain Magnificence, and courtly Swell:
Love touched my Soul at least with soft De-
sires,

And Vanity there fed her Meteor Fires.
This Truth at last the mighty Scenes let fall.
An Hour of Innocence was worth them all.

Lord of my Life! O, let thy sacred Ray
Shine o'er my Heart, and break its Clouds
away!

Deluding, flattering, faithless World adieu!
Long hast thou taught me, GOD IS ONLY
TRUE!

That God alone I trust, alone adore,
No more deluded, and misled no more.

Come,

Come, sacred Hour, when wavering
Doubts shall cease!

Come holy Scenes of long Repose and Peace!
Yet shall my Heart, to other Interests true,
A Moment balance 'twixt the World and
you?

Of pensive Nights, of long-reflecting Days,
Be yours, at last, the Triumph and the
Praise!

Great, gracious Master, whose unboun-
ded Sway,
Felt thro' Ten-thousand Worlds, those
Worlds obey;
Wilt thou for once thy awful Glories
shade,
And deign t' espouse the Creature thou hast
made?

All other Ties indignant I disclaim,
Dishonoured those, and infamous to name!

O fatal

L E T T E R XIII. 157

O fatal Ties, for which such Tears I've
shed;
For which the Pleasures of the World lay
dead!
That World's soft Pleasures you alone
disarm;
That World without you, still might have
its Charm.
But now those Scenes of tempting Hope I
close,
And seek the peaceful Studies of Repose;
Look on the past as Time that stole away,
And beg the Blessings of a happier Day.

Ye gay Saloons, ye golden-vested Halls,
Scenes of high Treats and heart-bewitching
Balls!
Dress, Figure, Splendor, Charms of Play,
farewell,
And all the Toilet's Science to excel!
Even

Even Love that ambushed in this beauteous
Hair,

No more shall lie, like *Indian* Archers, there.
Go, erring Love! for nobler Objects given!
Go, beauteous Hair, a Sacrifice to Heaven!

Soon shall the Veil these glowing Features
hide,

At once the Period of their Power and Pride!
The hapless Lover shall no more complain
Of Vows unheard, or unrewarded Pain;
While calmly sleep in each untortured Breast
My secret Sorrow, and his Sighs profess.

Go, flattering Train! and, Slaves to me
no more,

With the same Sighs some happier Fair
adore!

Your altered Faith, I blame not, nor
bewail—

And haply yet, (what Woman is not frail?)

Yet

Yet, haply, might I calmer Minutes prove,
If he that loved me knew no other Love!

Yet were that Ardour, which his Breast
inspired,
By Charms of more than mortal Beauty
fired;
What nobler Pride! could I to Heaven
reign
The Zeal, the Service that I boasted mine!
O, change your false Desires, ye flattering
Train!
And love me pious, whom ye loved profane!

These long Adieus with Lovers doomed to
go,
Or prove their Merit, or my Weakness
shew,
But Heaven, to such soft Frailties less
severe,
May spare the Tribute of a female Tear,
May

160 L E T T E R XIII.

May yield one tender Moment to deplore
Those gentle Hearts that I must hold no
more.

To M. DE ST. EVREMOND.

SHALT thou, sad Servant of my darker
Days,
Bewail that Fortune fairer Hours displays?
Go, Witness of the wandering Life I led,
And cease those Tears, for Thee more justly
shed.

See the long Series of my Sufferings o'er!
Avoid the Storm, pursue, partake the
Shore.

Declining Years should still in Silence
close,
And hide their human Weakness in Re-
pose.

Shall

L E T T E R XIII. 161

Shall I in Life's, in Beauty's Bloom retire?
Grown old in Courts shall EVREMOND
expire?

Far from those Courts, tho' every Call
divine!

Yet, Reason, Sense and Fortitude are
thine.

Are these unheard? In Habit's powerful
Reign

Does Reason wield her little Arms in vain?
Yet shalt thou yield to my superior Sway:
Thy Queen commands thee; EVREMOND,
obey.

Sick of the World, she quits the painful
Scene,

And calls Thee thence, if yet she calls, thy
Queen.

Mr. DE ST. EVREMOND.

O, still my Sovereign, whose unrivaled
Sway,

'Tis yet my Pride, my Pleasure to obey.

I come—I fly—No!—Death that Duty
ends,

Deprived of Thee, the last, the best of
Friends!

LETTER XIV.

ST. EVREMOND *to* WALLER.

THERE are two Setts of Men against whom a Writer of any other Country than their own stands but an ill Chance of preserving his Reputation. These are *Dutch* Authors and *Dutch* Booksellers. They divide you, Body and Soul, between them. The former steal your Works: the latter your Name. The Authors publish your Writings as their own Productions: The Booksellers publish the Productions of others as yours.

M 2

They

They treat you like the Pirates of *Algiers*. You no sooner fall into their Hands, than they strip you naked, and set you to hard Labour. I speak of their Cruelty by Experience. An honest Bookseller of *Rotterdam* has not only published several of my Pieces in the Names of his Day-labouring Authors, but has set me to work on Subjects, of which I am at least as ignorant as the People that wrote in my Name. He has made me Author of a Treatise on the Longitude, though there are not above two Stars in the Sky that I know by Name. I stand on the Title-Page of Chemical Aphorisms, though I do not know an Alembic

lambic from a Dark-lantern. I am Author of a Treatise against the *Antinomians*, of whom I know as much as I do of the Antediluvians : But what is most provoking, he has introduced me in the Character of Field-Marshal of *France*, and has made me write a Narrative of a Battle, in which I was forced to run away.

This is certainly worse Treatment than that which made *Diagoras* turn Atheist. We are told, that when a Plagiary had stolen and fathered his Book, he would no longer believe there were any Gods, because they did not punish the Thief with a Thunderbolt. For my own Part, I do not find that

the Impunity of these Caitiffs has made any Alteration in my Faith. All I am afraid of is, that the Devil has too much Sense to let Bookfellers come into his Dominions ; for as he has the Character of a Genius, it would not be long before they gave him the Fool's Cap of an Author.

I am very confident that my honest Friend at *Rotterdam*, were he to carry on Trade in his Kingdoms, would have no manner of Scruple to make him Author of a Treatise on Original Sin. This Publication would soon be followed by a Dissertation on the medical Effects of Brimstone, *Auctore Serenissimo Diabolo, M. D.* or
a Nar-

LETTER XIV. 167

a Narrative of the Battle between himself and *Michael*, in which, like the poor Marshal *De St. Evremond*, he was put to the Rout.

M 4

LET.

LETTER XV.

WALLER *to* ST. EVREMOND.

I HAVE often thought that there is a great Similarity of Genius between *Ovid* and our Mr. *Cowley*. They have the same Fondness for pointed Expression, and minute Painting. Their Enthusiasm and their Fancy, and their Turn of Verse, which is sometimes easy, clean, and natural, and sometimes quaint, have all of them the greatest Resemblance of each other. And, what is no less observable, their Dispositions and Tempers are, in many Instances, alike. Mr. *Cowley's Complaint* has the very same Spirit and Features

L E T T E R X V. 169

Features with *Ovid's* melancholy *Elegies* written during his Exile ; and I am afraid, too, that it will have no better Effect.

It always gives me Pleasure to observe the Coincidence of Genius, and Taste. For this Purpose, when I have the Favour of Mr. *Cowley's* Company, I very often take up *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, and read such Passages to him as I think will strike him most. What he principally admires in the Story of the Rape of *Proserpine*, was her Grief for the Loss of the Flowers she had gathered.

Collecti flores tunicis cecidere remissis.
Tantaque simplicitas puerilibus adfuit
annis ;

Hæc

Hæc quoque virgineum movit jactura dolor.
lorem.

Had he written on the same Subject,
I verily believe that he would have
had the same Thought.

In reading the Story of *Pyramus*
and *Thisbe*, we both concluded that
there must be something wrong in the
following Passage :

Tempore crevit amor, tædæ quoque jure
coissent,

Sed vetuere patres, quod non potuere
vetare.

Ex æquo captis ardebant mentibus ambo.

Sed vetuere patres quod non potuere ve-
tare, is certainly Nonsense. Yet so it
stands in all the Editions I have met
with,

with, undisturbed by Commentators, who pass it over in *sacro silentio*. Nothing, however, is more easy than to remove the Error, which lies only in the Punctuation. Let the Passage stand thus, and it is restored to Sense.

—— Tædæ quoque jure coissent,
Sed vetuere patres. Quod non potuere
vetare,
Ex æquo captis ardebant mentibus ambo.

There is, if I am not mistaken, another Error in the same Story.

Conscius omnes *abest*; nutu signisque loquuntur.

If every Spy is at a Distance, why should they have Recourse to Nods and Signs, to convey their Sentiments?

ments ? That could only be necessary, admitting the Case to be quite otherwise. Suppose then we read

Conscius omnis *adest* ; nutu signisque loquuntur.

This Alteration is by no means violent, and it at once brings the Passage to Sense and Consistency. However, I am not so hardy as to say, *Sic lege meo periculo*. I only offer this to you by way of Conjecture ; but the first, I am satisfied, must be right.

L E T.

LETTER XVI.

ST. EVREMOND *to* WALLER.

IT is said of the Mouse of *Armenia*, that, such is her Passion for Cleanliness, she will sooner die than come out of her Hole, if the Mouth of it is by any means made dirty. I own I have often admired the Decency of this good Mouse, though I despair of imitating it. The Love of Purity is one of the natural Virtues, and it grieves me to think how strangely I have degenerated from it. Ever since I quitted my Marshal's Batoon, I have had, as you lately told me, the least Attachment to this Virtue of any Man living.

living. When I went from *France*, I left their Neatness to the Men, and took with me the Slovenliness of the Women. This Disposition was abundantly encouraged by a long Residence in *Holland*; for the People of that Country, like your *English* Hogs, keep their Sleeping-places neat, but their Persons dirty. A daily and familiar Intercourse with Dogs and Cats, of which I have always a numerous Family, completes the rest. This is a Commerce which no Consideration whatever could induce me to part with. It gives me as much Consequence as belongs to the Man who has a large Family to provide for, or a Province under his Care. It is a
constant

constant Exercise to my Benevolence, which a Man, who, like me, is without social Connections, must always be in Danger of losing. Without any Servant of my own Species, I live with the Magnificence of a Prince, who has a large Retinue ; and, what no Prince in the World can safely assert, I am convinced that my Domestics are unexceptionably faithful. I amuse myself by preserving a good Understanding, and maintaining the Balance of Power between the two Species of Animals that attend me. They know their respective Provinces, and make no Encroachments on each other. My Cats have the Territory of

of the Shoulders, my Dogs of the Lap.

I love to keep up the Dignity of Ancestry, and I dine, as I suppose, in the same Style and Manner with my first Parent, before his Expulsion from Paradise. I have seen a Painting of *Tintoret's*, representing him at Dinner, surrounded by a Variety of his Fellow Creatures; to such of which as were capable of partaking with him, he was distributing his Bounty. In this respect I find another Satisfaction in the Society I speak of. I gratify myself by distinguishing and rewarding Merit. Modesty goes a great way with me; and the Animal that is least importunate

portunate is always fed the first. You will hardly believe what an Effect this has had upon the Teasers. Observing the Rewards of Distance and Modesty, they have totally changed their Conduct. I took the Liberty of mentioning this to the King. — “ My Dogs, (said he) *St. Evremond*, are more incorrigible than yours : They will never give over teasing, till they get the Bone.”

L E T T E R XVII.

ST. EVREMOND *to* WALLER.

BEFORE the infamous and disgraceful Peace of the *Pyrenées*, a political Writer of considerable Name in *France*, proposed, upon the Necessity of military Reinforcements, that the Ecclesiastics should be called to the Discipline of Arms ; — that the Monasteries, like so many Graves at the General Resurrection, should give up their Dead ; — and that a Sett of Men, who were a Burthen to Society and to themselves, should be made Use of in the Preservation of Civil Property. The Cardinal Premier was
so

so enraged at this Proposal, that had not the Author made a seasonable Visit to another Country, he would soon have become as useless a Subject to *France*, as those whose Confinement was voluntary.

Nevertheless there was something very reasonable in what he advanced; and it is really astonishing, that in a Country, distinguished for the Cultivation of Civil and Political Knowledge, there should be the least Remains of any Institution so absurd as that of cutting off a Number of Men from the Service of their Fellow-Creatures for the Glory of God. Certainly the best and most acceptable

Services we are capable of rendering to the Creator of the Universe, must be those that arise from the Discharge of the Social Duties: And it has often been Matter of serious Amazement to me, how Ecclesiastics came by the Idea, that they should do the greatest Honour to God by renouncing all Intercourse with his Works.

But I suppose there might be Reasons of private Indulgence, secret Intrigue, and uninspected Growth of Power. These Nests of holy Loun-
gers the Church must have considered as a *Corps de Reserve*, that would be ready to defend that Power which supported

ported them in Indolence, in Case of unforeseen or dangerous Invasions. It is plain that your *Henry* the Eighth looked upon them in this Light, when he had the good Sense and the good Policy to extirpate them from his Dominions.

Christianity, with respect to the Support of such Institutions as these, is a System more burthenfome and less serviceable than *Mahometism*, or even *Druidism*. The *Druid* would retire to his Groves for the Exercise of his superstitious Devotion ; but if his Country were attacked by an Enemy, he failed not to be in the Front of Battle.

In.

In Proportion to the Progress of Philosophy and the Advancement of moral Knowledge, it might have been expected, that the Idea of rendering the Body of Ecclesiastics useful to Society, should have been more effectually attended to. But, perhaps, there never was a Time, when they were less serviceable than at present.

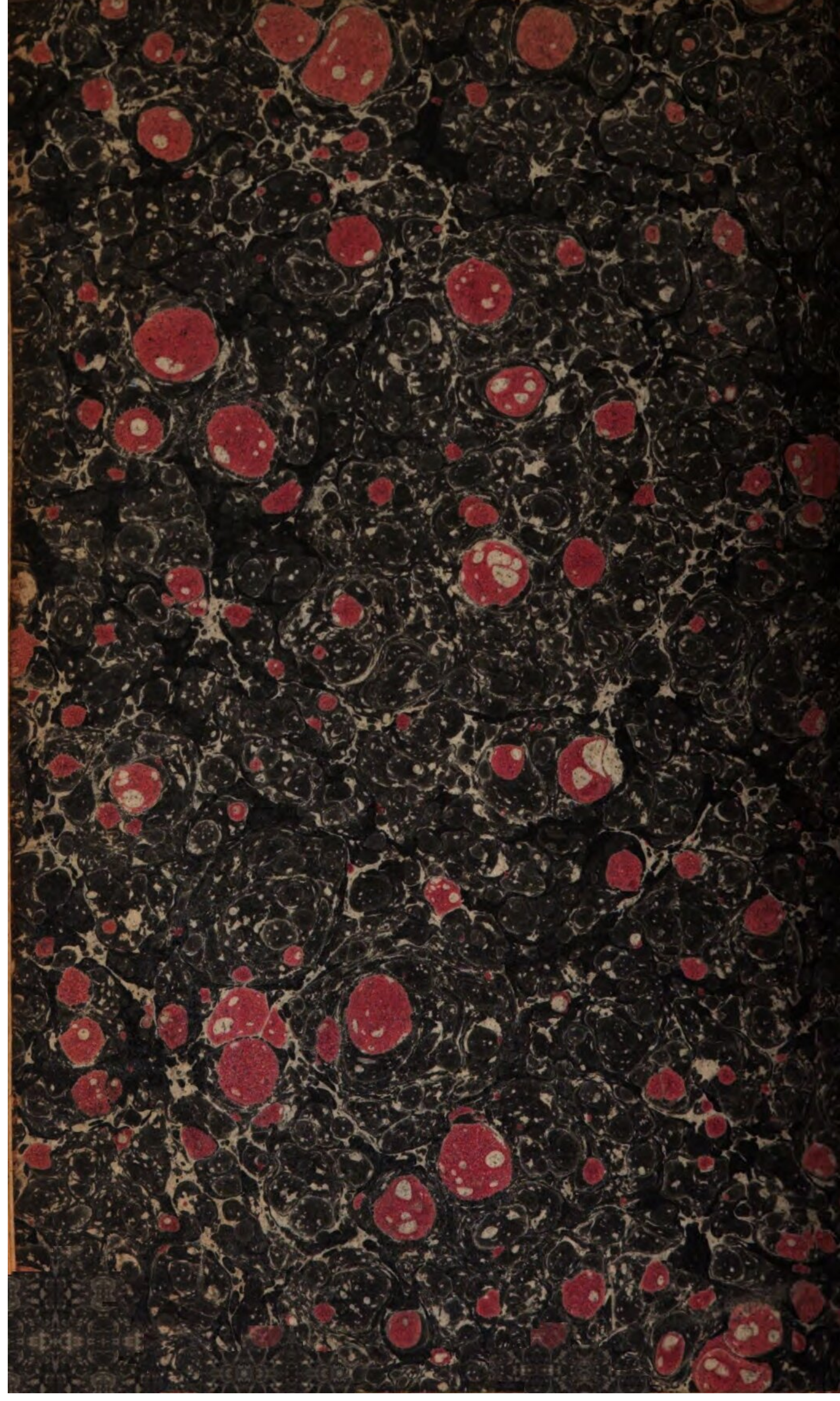
When your *Richard* the First was at War with *France*, he found a formidable Enemy in *Philip*, Bishop of *Beau-vieu*, who annoyed his Coasts with distinguished Valour and Intrepidity. The Bishop, however, was at length taken by *Richard* in a Skirmish. The Pope demanded his Dismission

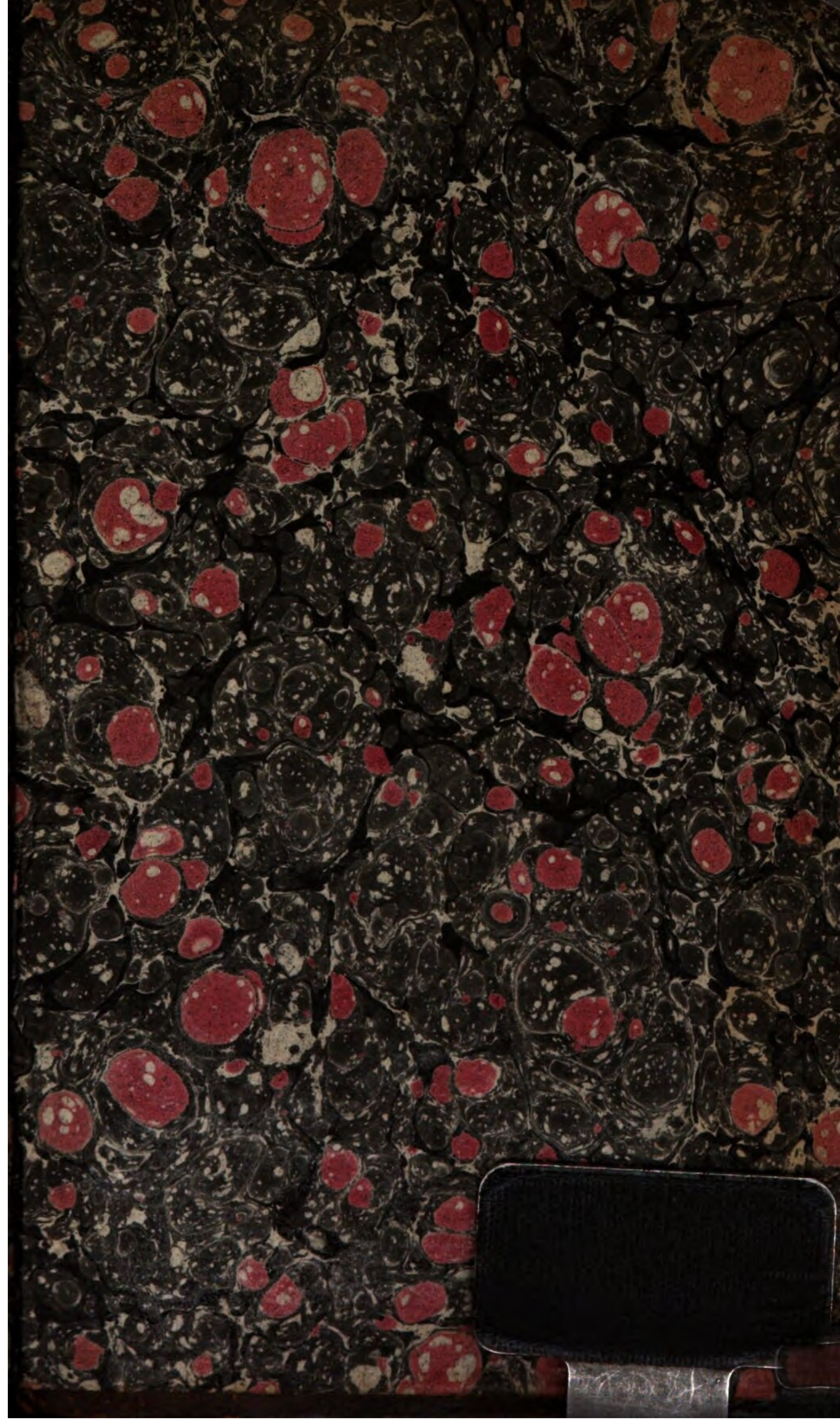
mission as an Ecclesiastical Person,
and bade the King reverence his Son's
Coat. *Richard* immediately sent the
Bishop's Coat of Mail to the Pope,
with these Words engraven upon it:
“ See whether this be thy Son's Coat,
“ or not.”

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